Rugby Union Five Nations Championship: England 20 France 23

England run out of steam for final push

Robert Armstrong at Twickenham

ENGLAND's coach Jack Rowell will hardly have lost much sleep over the first Twickenham win in 10 years by a France side who ultimately outplayed the home team with their own brand of interactive rugby. This stunning setback had nothing to do with England's technical preparation, which was first-rate; instead it came down to a dramatic change of tactics on the hoof, as well as French heart and stamina in an astonishing final half-hour.

Rowell has much to ponder now that the Rugby Football Union wants to make the coach's job full-time, but his fresh vision of England's national style is already an established fact of life; the task is how to persuade the players to give it substance for the full 80 minutes.

Before half-time Phil de Glanville's men played some of the most sublime rugby seen at Twickenham, but they simply had no answer to a French renaissance that overhauled England's 20-6 lead and produced 17 unanswered points.

The Triple Crown is still available to England when they play Wales in Cardiff in next week but it is bound to feel more like a hollow crown after the most dramatic turnaround in the Five Nations Championship during the nineties.

In the past 21 months France have defeated England three times in succession, underlining their status as the third-best side in the 1995 World Cup, a position achieved at England's expense. "The players are in shock after that result," said Rowell. "It's a game of mental and physical stamina and we ran out of it. They knew that even in the first half we turned a lot of ball over, and in the second half we didn't get to the areas we should have. Still, we have to take all things in our stride and put them right."

Ironically, England had been criticised beforehand for not having moved into top gear until the final quarter of their victories over the Scots and the Irish. This time such key players as Rodber, de Glanville, Johnson and Stimpson shot out of the starting gate like thoroughbreds, only to fade into anonymity because they won no ball to play with.

Jean-Claude Skrela and Pierre Villepreux, France's coaches, must take credit for the relentless determination of their backs and forwards to keep the ball in hand when they still had a 14-point deficit to make up.

The Brive centre Christophe Lamaison, who scored a try and kicked two conversions, two penalty goals and a dropped goal, was also a seminal influence on France's transformation from a side reacting to events into one that dictated the pattern of play.

Certainly France should be too strong for Scotland when they attempt to clinch the Grand Slam at Parc des Princes on March 15. Remarkably the loss of their captain Abdel Benazzi with a rib injury midway through the second half did not hinder the momentum of a cohesive pack which cruised through successive phases with a cold passion. The substitutes Castel and de Rougemont added bite to the French challenge.

When Rowell was asked, predictably, why he used no substitutes to shore up a disintegrating rearguard, he pointed out, reasonably enough, that had a voluntary substitution been quickly followed by an injury-induced change in personnel, England might well have been terminally undermined.

In any case England believed that the 15 players who had carved out a 20-6 lead would be up to the task of quelling a spirited French fightback. "You tend to start thinking that a score like that will allow you to win the game," admitted de Glanville. "But after the break we weren't at the top of our game physically and perhaps the mental aspect wasn't quite right either."

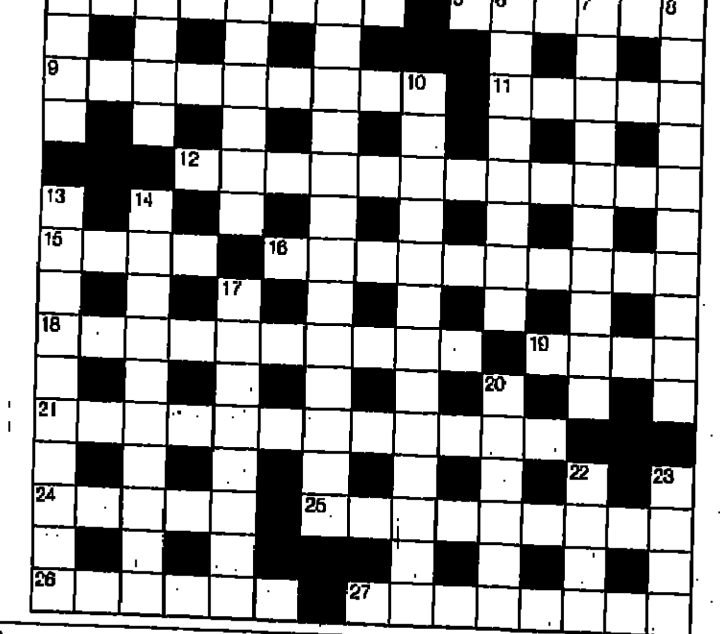
In the opening 50 minutes, though, it was mostly one-way traffic as Grayson coolly kicked four penalty goals and a 25-metre drop goal which signalled England's growing authority. Even when Dallaglio's 40th-minute try at the end of a 30-metre run was answered on the hour by a lightning strike by Leflamand, who left Underwood for dead, England still seemed to have sufficient organisation to hold out.

However, 11 minutes from time Lamaison rumbled the English defence again with a brilliant 15-metre break, drifting inside two would-be tacklers to score. It required only a penalty goal by the Brive player to complete the demolition.



Down to earth . . . England flanker Lawrence Dallaglio scores the first try despite the spectacular airborne efforts of France's Philippe Carbonneau to stop him PHOTOGRAPH: IAN WALDIE/REUTERS

Cryptic crossword by Araucaria



Across

1 Pickpockets get credit for testing oil (8)
5 One-horse tally? (6)
9 A seat in church and a beast in church — at Scotch Corner? (4,5)
11 Permission to depart (5)
12 Greater power for turning came to injure oriental (5,7)
15 Diminished accommodation? (4)
16 Pope's men in strange un-English guises in the Turf? (5,5)
18 Salad without dressing, I'll be bound (5,5)
19 Audible aid to solve endless obscurity is the main idea (4)
21 Prevented trouble about musical talk, which can be painful (7,5)
24 The feet of William Bishop (5)
25 Setter's backing a countryman that's coming out (9)
26 Your solving this, for example — turned round (nothing's lost) (6)
27 The work of the setter alone (2,6)

Down

1,23 Cut short a page: it helps if one's nettled (4,4)
2,22 Cask with flax, in which projects develop? (8)
3 Pull more than one's weight in Roses battle (6)
4,13 Clean high bounce wanted if possible — impossible! (6,5,2,1,4,5)
6 Extract money from prisons at tea-time? (4,4)
7 Spanish philosopher, no less, dark and irredeemably serious (10)
8 Make alterations in unfinished clothes — extraordinary! (10)
10 Minister, very old, keeping me under wraps (4,9)
13 See 4
14 Pike with head of shark can go through rock (10)
17 Familiarisation? There's trouble on another point (8)
20 One going by train? It's strictly for the birds (6)
22 See 2
23 See 1 down

Last week's solution

W	I	D	G	E	T		T	U	R	M	E	R	I	C
O		E		Y				N		O		E		A
O	S	C	A	R		A	F	F	I	D	A	V	I	T
L		I		I		N		O		E		I		T
P	A	S	S	E	N	G	E	R		R	I	V	A	L
A		I				L		G		A		E		E
C	I	V	I	L	L	I	B	E	R	T	Y			
K		E		O		C		T		O		B		P
			B	R	E	A	K	T	H	R	O	U	G	H
C		S		D		N		A				N		A
H	U	M	U	S		C	U	B	E	S	U	G	A	R
A		U		T		H		L		O		A		I
L	O	D	G	E	G	A	T	E		W	A	L	E	S
E		G		S		N				E		O		E
T	H	E	S	T	A	T	E		B	R	O	W	S	E

Scotland 38 Ireland 10

Ireland blown away in gale

Ian Malin at Murrayfield

FOR Scotland the Quaich, the handsome silver trophy that is these countries' version of the Calcutta Cup; for Ireland a cup of woe. In the teeth of an Edinburgh gale, the remnants of an Irish team that had played so promisingly at Cardiff last month were blown away.

Brian Ashton may need every one of the six years of his new contract as Ireland coach to make them competitive. They were staggeringly inept and the statistics of their Five Nations season are horrific. A record defeat in 109 contests against the Scots virtually ensures a wooden spoon with 141 points conceded in four matches.

Perhaps the issue should not be whether Italy, one of the six teams to have beaten Ireland in seven games this season, should be added to the Five Nations but whether Ireland should be making way for them.

"Today was a setback," said Ashton, who declined to use the injury to his captain Staples as an excuse. Staples tore a hamstring in creating Hickie's exhilarating try after 25 minutes. The loss of Wood earlier this season, then of Popplewell also from the front row, coupled with that of Elwood's steadying influence at fly-half, had already made Ireland's task of winning at Murrayfield for the first time in 12 years difficult. And once Tait, successfully back at centre after nine years, had cancelled out Hickie's score with a try on the half-hour, Ireland were never in the game.

Davidson was muscled aside at the line-out here by Weir, Scotland's best player along with a revitalised Chalmers. Ashton complained of interference on Ireland's own ball in the line-outs but recognised that Scotland had been more streetwise. They can now relish their final trip to the Parc des Princes on Saturday week, though whether they have enough power up front to do England a favour is another matter. When Walton barged through for their second try before the hour he had picked the ball up from the base of Scotland's own scrum which was being driven backwards.

As Weir, Townsend and Stanger cruised over the line in the final quarter, the Scotland forwards, battering at the fringes of scrum and ruck, grew in stature as the Irish resistance crumbled.

By the end, Scotland were running in tries almost at will. Chalmers maintained the tactical control and running skills that made him a Lion at 20. "The Lions should look no further than Craig for their fly-half," said Scotland's backs coach David Johnston.

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The Washington Post Le Monde

West spurns French calls for Zaire force

Chris McGreal in Kinshasa

FRANCE is pursuing a lonely campaign to revive plans for an international force in Zaire to halt the rebel advance and prevent what it says is a genocide in the making. But sceptics in Washington and Europe doubt the accusations of widespread massacres of refugees, and question French motives.

With rebels rapidly advancing on Kisangani, Zaire's third-largest city, Paris is stepping up its efforts to win United Nations backing for a foreign force to halt the fighting. It says it is concerned for hundreds of thousands of Rwandan Hutu refugees who it claims are being systematically murdered by the rebels.

France's humanitarian aid minister, Xavier Emmanuelli, renewed the accusation on Monday after a visit to refugees fleeing eastern Zaire. "Without organised and secure aid, men, women and children are condemned to die of hunger, exhaustion, illness or to be killed by those who have been chasing them for more than three months," he said.

But UN and other foreign officials say that no massacre sites have been uncovered, nor have witnesses or survivors come forward with convincing accounts.

Paris argues that Rwanda's Tutsi army invaded Zaire in an attempt to exterminate Hutu refugees before Rwanda resettles Tutsis in a divided Zaire. France accuses Uganda of joining the invasion, and other countries in the region of supporting it.

Although there is little doubt that Rwanda invaded Zaire last October, France's critics say the war is now a civil conflict because the rebels are mainly Zaireans and have won support among their compatriots in their war against President Mobutu Sese Seko's 31-year dictatorship.

After a visit to Zaire last week by the Dutch co-operation minister, Jan Pronk, a Dutch official accused Paris of denying reality. "The French refuse to allow any talk of the Zairean conflict as internal," he said. "Paris only wants it discussed in terms of a foreign invasion. That way it can justify foreign intervention to prop up what it sees as a pro-French government."

Meanwhile Kisangani seemed poised to fall this week. Even the Zairean army barely bothers to hide its resignation to defeat. The airport is awash with the wives and children of soldiers trying to scramble on to the last flights before the rebels arrive. The poor clutter the pounding Congo river in hundreds of dug-out canoes.

The region's governor, Lombeya Bosongo, would like to join the exodus. But the army has twice prevented him from leaving Kisangani, fearing it would signal the final

continued on page 4

Washington Post, page 15

This 1 metre-high, 3,000-year-old limestone statue of a woman with four children, found in Egypt's Nile Delta town of Zagazig, was unveiled by archaeologists on Monday. Another sensational find, a 4,300-year-old mass tomb unearthed in the United Arab Emirates, was also disclosed PHOTOGRAPH: ENRIC MARTI

Rebels defy peace offer in Albania

Joanna Robertson in Vlore and Helena Smith in Tirana

ARMED insurgents spread their rebellion into central Albania on Monday as Italian diplomats summoned rebel leaders to shipboard talks in the Adriatic to try to achieve a negotiated settlement with the Tirana government.

At a meeting on the Italian warship San Giorgio, representatives from the southern town of Vlore, the epicentre of the revolt, promised to persuade the town's people to lay down their arms.

Meanwhile insurgents seized control of Permet late on Sunday night, Berat on Monday, and appeared poised to take the town of Fier, where the army and regular police withdrew, leaving a hard core of President Sali Berisha's Shik secret police to hold the town.

The rebels were also reported to have captured one of the country's two air bases, at Kucove. Their successes mean only two small towns separate them from the main port, Durres, about 30km from Tirana.

On Sunday, southern Albania crackled with gunfire as the rebels celebrated their first political victory after the president went on national television to make his biggest concession yet to the armed committees now in command of three southern towns. He promised fresh elections, the formation of a coalition government of "national reconciliation", and also extended a week-long amnesty for insurgents to give up their weapons, after an earlier deadline expired on Saturday last week without any sign of their doing so.

Even as the Vlore rebel leaders were signing a declaration saying they "undertook to favour the immediate handing back of weapons in the hands of the citizens of Vlore and to ensure public order and progressively restore normal administration", protesters, emboldened by their apparently endless supply of looted arms and ammunition, repeated that Sali Berisha must resign as president.

In Tirana on Monday, the beleaguered president and his rightwing Democratic Party were engaged in furious horse trading with the opposition after he agreed to form a government of national reconciliation and hold fresh elections in June. But without control over the interior ministry — which heads the police — local authorities or the state-run media, opposition parties claim free and fair elections could not be held.

The prospect of the crisis being solved without Mr Berisha's resignation looked increasingly dim this week. Insiders said the Italian government had told the president it would be willing to evacuate him and his family.



Paralysed writer dies in cloud of literary glory

Paul Webster in Paris

JEAN-DOMINIQUE Bauby, a paralysed French journalist who dictated a 130-page book letter by letter by blinking his left eyelid, has died in a Paris hospital only days after his work was received with unanimous praise by the critics.

Just before releasing The Diving Suit And The Butterfly, Mr Bauby, aged 44, was taken from his hospital at Berck-sur-Mer, northern France, to another at Garches. He died of respiratory failure.

But friends said he was fully aware of the success of his extraordinary account of Locked-in Syndrome, a condition brought on by a stroke in December 1995. Except for the left eyelid, all his muscles had ceased to function.

At the time, Mr Bauby was editor of the magazine Elle. He said that Locked-in Syndrome replaced daily worries by the only question that mattered: can one live in a state of absolute disaster?

Mr Bauby, who had two children, was able to signal his elation at the critical success of the first book to explain the inner sensations of being totally paralysed. It appears destined to become a minor classic, both for the quality of the writing and the unique insight into a rare condition.

The Goncourt prizewinner, Eric Orsenna, said: "I salute the work more than the courage needed to write it. This was not a performance but literature which explores what is left when only the essential remains — life itself."

The 28 chapters of Le Scaphandre et le Papillon were dictated letter by letter over several months to a publisher's representative. The book is probably the first personal analysis of a medical condition which leaves the body paralysed but the brain functioning normally.

In the interview with Mr Orsenna reported by Elle, Mr Bauby said he used to wake at 4am to imagine and memorise each sequence, which would then be dictated over three hours by blinking his left eye to indicate letters.

When Mr Bauby collapsed in December 1995, he had coincidentally been working on a feminised version of The Count Of Monte Cristo, a book where Dumas evokes a 19th century image of Locked-in Syndrome in which a paralysed man can only communicate with the count by blinking his eyes.

Austria	AS30	Malta	50c
Belgium	BF75	Netherlands	G 4.75
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.50
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 450	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,000	Switzerland	SF 3.30

Human life devalued by artificial creation

WITH the splitting of the atom and the consequent manufacture of nuclear weapons the human race confronted, for the first time, the issue of whether or not it should annihilate itself physically.

With the first cloning of a mammal in a laboratory (Scientists scorn sheep clone fears, March 2), humanity confronts the issue of whether, in effect, or not it will extinguish all emotional, spiritual and even psychological attributes of itself: whether it will reduce itself to being merely the outcome of a cold-blooded manipulation of cells in a sterile laboratory.

It is a strange thing that life, and particularly human life, is devalued, not so much by its wanton destruction, though that is bad enough, as by its artificial creation; its being manufactured in a situation grotesquely out of keeping with that in which organic beings have emerged on this planet.

Nothing could devalue life more than the fact that it can be stamped out to order, like a series of ball-bearings in a car factory. This is the ultimate reduction, the final devaluation, the consequences of which will be as dehumanising as anything devised by the Nazis.

I could scarcely think of any individuals less competent to make an ethical assessment of this act than the scientists who mock our concerns and who have been determined to push ahead with the cloning project. Their comments so far suggest that they are completely unaware of the implications of this deeply questionable piece of bio-engineering.
Denys Trussell,
Auckland, New Zealand

THE ethical aspects of human cloning are much debated at the moment, but what about the ethics of animal cloning? What justification is there for repeated surgical invasions of female animals — extracting egg cells and implanting embyros? The cloned Dolly embyro was transferred surgically to a temporary recipient ewe who was killed six days later. The Dolly embryo was extracted, deemed to be viable and implanted in yet another ewe, which brought it to term.

Dolly was cloned from an adult. But, at the same time, lambs were cloned from foetal cells. These were obtained by killing pregnant ewes at Day 26 and extracting the foetal material at autopsy. Of the 156 embryos implanted, 21 were deemed to have resulted in pregnancies. Later, when four of the foetuses apparently died, the ewes were killed.

What right do we as a species have to inflict pain and suffering on other sentient beings?
Joyce d'Silva,
Director, Compassion in World Farming, Petersfield, Hampshire

WITH the sheep-cloning announcement, we are treated to the familiar mantra — recited every time some grotesque new biotech "advance" is put before the public — that it will lead to cures for cancer, cystic fibrosis, Alzheimer's, ageing and the rest of humanity's ills.

These researchers are in the Promise business. When will such cures materialise? Government data (eg, the last General Household Survey) shows that the health of all age groups has actually been declining over the past few decades.

People are concerned about science's capacity to manufacture "too perfect" hatched humanity. They should be more concerned with science's proven lack of competence and predictive powers — and, therefore, its capacity for grave errors. Genetic manipulation remains extremely difficult and its results are unpredictable.

The immediate impact is on animals, not people — initially in the lab, where large numbers suffer grave malformations during the experimental phase. Once production-belt manufacture is under way they will continue to be abused and deprived of everything that's natural.

Cloning will increase the suffering of sheep. And yes, human cloning will follow. All reproductive technologies — eg, artificial insemination, embryo transfer — end up being used in people.
Andrew Tyler,
Animal Aid, Tonbridge, Kent

Le Pen offers focus for rage

THE PROBLEM with simply tarring France's National Front with the brush of Nazism — as the Le Monde cartoon and editorial, and to a lesser extent, Alex Duval Smith's article (February 23) do — is that it does not address any of the underlying questions.

Le Pen's party has been able to position itself as the party of revolution against the ossified *ancien régime* of both the Gaullists and the Socialists because the Front has provided a "philosophical" focus for the inchoate rage of much of the French population. To many people, the Front offers hope and the catharsis of rage, however illusory the first and dangerous the second.

The likelihood is that even if the Front should win power, the rage they have unleashed may well, in turn, gobble them up, especially when their proffered hope turns out to be dust and ashes. The legacy of 1793 is less well-known than that of 1789, but it is a deep fault line within the French psyche.

I have been going back and forward to France for several decades, as a dual national, and have observed the changes in France at first hand, with personal anguish yet with a certain distance. I agree with Alex Duval Smith that France at this moment is almost paralysed by inertia, confusion and despair, a situation which could, but not inevitably, lead to National Front victory. But if we have "analysis" of the kind that replaces thought with slogans — if that's the best the French establishment can do — then it may indeed be inevitable.

This is not a recipe for doing nothing: for the answer may lie more in affirming — and acting on — the values which make for a truly civil society: openness, honesty, compassion and tolerance.
Sophie Masson,
Invergowrie, NSW, Australia

Education's key to the future

THE Department for Education and Employment's recommendation that it will not be profitable to spend public money on educating tens of thousands of qualified students in Britain because they may face dead-end jobs or relatively lowly careers is a cruel and short-sighted position (Britain to squeeze student numbers, February 16). It presumes a divine knowledge of the future, and could even be a self-fulfilling prophecy. If Britain fails to make full use of its brain power it may fail, and deserve to fail, to develop a brainy society.

It is knowledge, imagination, innovation, experimentation, research and entrepreneurship that will create the opportunities and jobs of the future. Denying education to the able is a recipe for a mediocre society in which there will, indeed, be a lack of good jobs.

If, perchance, some young people do fail to find jobs after university, is it not better that they emigrate educated rather than uneducated?
Robert L Cooke,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Why bronzes should go home

IT IS ironic that while the British Museum claims that Bernie Grant's campaign to return stolen artefacts to Benin (MP causes stir by going for bronzes, March 2) does not have the official support of the Nigerian government, others cite that government's human rights record as a reason not to consider restitution.

These artefacts were looted from the palace in Benin in an act which, even 100 years ago, would have been considered illegal in Europe. Restitution is an acknowledgement of a moral wrong and the first step in building a relationship based on mutual respect.

Mr Grant is not asking for the artefacts' return to the Nigerian government but to the Oba (king) of Benin. The Oba is not an agent of the government, and the people of Benin have no means to influence the policies of the present military regime. Restitution would be in the same spirit as returning the Stone of Scone to Scotland.

The British Museum, running scared at the queue of other possible claimants (Greece, Egypt, etc) hides behind the British Museum Act. Equally, to make restitution dependent on a return to democracy in Nigeria will appear to the people of Benin a cynical delaying tactic.
Peter Murphy,
Bletchingley, Surrey

Labour must keep to the left

IT IS with dismay that one reads of the British Labour party going down the same road as its Australian counterpart. The latter, along with other leftwing parties who moved across to right of centre in pursuit of discontented voters, was converted overnight from a party in power to an ineffective, dysfunctional rump.

Make no mistake, the same swinging voters who will throw Major out will later throw Blair out. They are the British contingent of that large part of the world electorate who feel disempowered, dissatisfied and frustrated with the social and economic conditions created by a rampaging and rapacious international capitalism.

Never was there a greater need for the left to keep left.

I say to British Labour, in the words of the famous Aussie road sign, "Go back, you're going the wrong way".
J W Ridge,
Stanthorpe, Queensland, Australia

Briefly

ONE might wonder at all the eulogies from the leaders of world imperialism to Deng Xiaoping, the butcher of over 1,500 workers and students in Tiananmen Square. But the reason is simple. Deng adapted his Stalinist-controlled state and society to capitalism and the capitalist market. Deng, the Bonaparte, ensured mega-profits for European, American, Japanese and Asiatic companies, and huge profits and privileges for those in and around the hierarchy of the Communist Party, with the resultant corruption.
Charlie Walsh,
London

CHARACTERISTIC Canadian deference in social, political, and economic activity is historically well-documented (Canadians take the offensive, March 9).

What is equally well known to northern European sportsmen is the Canadian response when you give them a stick and call it a game. Perhaps what Howard Schneider reports is not so much a new Canadian character as the adoption of well-established behaviour on the ice hockey rink to new spheres of activity.
Docent Robert M Dummer,
Ostrava, Czech Republic

YOU OWE an apology to the millions of followers of the Russian Orthodox Church for not identifying their leader — Patriarch Alexy of Moscow and all Russia — who is pictured with Madeleine Albright (March 2). In his country he is a better known and respected leader than she is in hers.
Isabel Best,
Nyon, Switzerland

I WAS interested to see your report (Patients face record wait for treatment, March 2). My father had a problem with his bladder. Some months after requesting treatment he was given an NHS hospital appointment for July 1997. The letter arrived on December 11, 1996, the day after he died of cancer of the bladder in the *same* hospital.
Steven Zade,
Paris, France

I ENJOYED Adrian Searle's review of Paula Rego's work (February 23) but found your choice of drawings was both unpleasant and unbecoming.
Roberto Pernia,
Condes de Aragón, Spain

CARS must be redesigned. When I am smoking and the phone rings, it is almost impossible to steer and change gear at the same time.
Norman Coe,
San Cugat del Vallés, Spain



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Lebanon 'security zone' snares Israel

EYEWITNESS
David Hirst

ISRAELI columnists call it "Israel's Vietnam", "that cursed place", that "Moloch" devouring its young manhood. They are referring, to South Lebanon, the last violent frontier of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Last month's helicopter collision took their anguish to new heights. It was an accident, but an all but inevitable one.

"There is no means, no patent," wrote one, "that the Israeli army has not tried to reduce casualties in this war — but the war wins."

Impossible to reach from Israel, and difficult to get to from Beirut, Israel's South Lebanese "security zone" is a strange place. When gunfire is not disturbing its bucolic calm, it seems about as improbable a starting point for another Arab-Israeli war as one could imagine. Yet such it could become, as Israeli-Syrian relations worsen.

But perhaps the strangest thing about the zone is that you rarely clap eyes on this "enemy" — strange, that is, until you grasp that its very invisibility is a measure of the "Islamic resistance's" effectiveness. For Israeli soldiers now do all they can to reduce their exposure — by such means as helicopters — when move they must.

The few Israelis I saw in a two-day visit were visible only because of Hizbullah's latest operation. They were in convoy to the key outpost of Dabshe. Hizbullah had just launched another dawn raid on this treeless height above the market town of Nabatiyah. The Israelis admitted that a sergeant had died. It was a small-scale clash, but the stuff of which, repeated a thousandfold, Vietnams are made.

In the ensuing Israeli bombardment, the people of Nabatiyah took to their basements while inhabitants of the zone went about their business as if they belonged to one world and the bedlam of outgoing fire to quite another.

Israeli protection did not account for their sense of security; it was their knowledge that they need not fear Hizbullah. Under the US-brokered "rules" of this conflict, neither side is allowed to attack civilians. Hizbullah shows far more respect for them than the Israelis.

"You hear of dozens of civilian casualties over there, but there are hardly any here," said a Christian resident.

The winning of hearts and minds is a key aspect of a Hizbullah strategy, which is succeeding in threatening the rationale of the zone itself.

The 2,500-man South Lebanese Army (SLA) serves as a sandbag between Hizbullah and northern Israel. It is made up of Lebanese fighters but backed by Israel, and morale is low. So is its manpower. Fifteen-year-olds, with identity cards falsifying their age, and grandfathers man the roadblocks.

Casualties in the SLA have fallen as Israeli ones have risen. Antoine Lahd, the dapper general who deserted the Lebanese army to serve Israel, said this was because "my men know the terrain better". But the real reason is that the Israelis now do what their protégés cannot do for them.

According to the United Nations, the Israelis have recently doubled their strength in the zone to 2,000 men, taking over some SLA positions. They have spent $10 million improving these — yet still they cannot staunch the fatal drain of young men.

Young is the word. It is a curious but revealing fact that Hizbullah fighters, numbering a mere 400 or so, are old by comparison — anything up to 35, usually married, often university students or professional men.

"A regular army can fight with raw recruits," said an officer of the UN force in Lebanon, Unifil, "if it has good commanders, but these guys are their own commanders — and they are really good."

It shows in the casualty figures. In the past, against Palestinians, the Israelis got used to inflicting disproportionate losses. But Hizbullah has narrowed the gap to one Israeli killed for as few as 2.7 of their own. That is a good ratio for any attacking force and it is being achieved by fearlessness, planning and patience.

Hizbullah steadily updates its arsenal. In December Israel withdrew its US-built M60 tanks from the zone, replacing them with its own Merkava-3's. Three soldiers had just died in M60s when they came under fire from Hizbullah's newly acquired Heat armour-piercing missiles.

One "weapon" Hizbullah usually takes into battle is a video camera. In boosting its supporters' morale and lowering the enemy's, it is possibly the most effective weapon of all. To General Lahd, films of Israeli soldiers being blown apart by mines or the Hizbullah flag being planted atop the Dabshe outpost are cheap showmanship. But not so for Hizbullah.

Its motivations, religious and patriotic, and the vitality of its fighting machine, are reason enough why it will not go away, and why the Israelis are deluding themselves if they think it will.

● The head of the Palestinian legislative council called on Monday for the suspension of all talks with Israel in protest at a decision by the government of Binyamin Netanyahu to hand over 9 per cent of the West Bank instead of the 30 per cent that Palestinians expected as the next phase of Israeli withdrawal from occupied territory.

Washington Post, page 16

Yeltsin rises from the ashes

David Hearst in Moscow

BORIS Yeltsin raised himself from the ashes of his second term as Russian president last week, pledging in a state-of-the-nation speech to stop the chaos and disorder in the country, and promising his disillusioned electorate sweeping changes.

It was a forceful performance by a man who had been written off as an invalid after a heart operation four months ago and subsequent double pneumonia. Mr Yeltsin's supporters rallied, and damaging talk of a fight for succession was deflected.

"Enough is enough. The country must be managed by authority and not by circumstances. We must restore order, first of all in the government, and I shall do this," Mr Yeltsin said.

Punching the air with his finger, Mr Yeltsin, aged 66, made what amounted to a vigorous political comeback in an address carried live on two television channels.

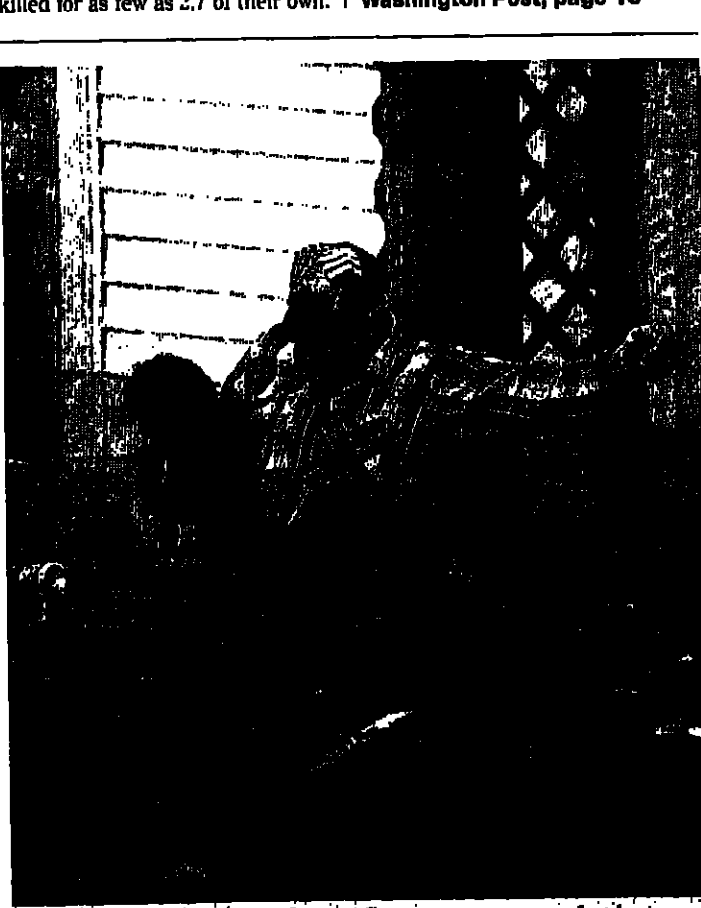
Producing his bleakest assessment yet of the stalled reforms in the country, he said his government had "grown fat" and inefficient. He professed his anger that millions of people were not receiving their salaries and pensions. "An end will be put to this outrage. All debts to pensioners must be paid by the middle of the year."

He attacked the monopolies of the gas and energy supply industry and the corrupt tender of public contracts. "Lack of will and indifference, irresponsibility and incompetence — that is how people see Russia's authorities," he said. "The authorities are getting fat . . . I am talking of those 'dignitaries' who are concerned only about their own well-being."

The target of this attack was the portly figure of his prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, sitting in the front rows of the Kremlin hall.

Mr Yeltsin remained unmoved on Nato in the run-up to the Helsinki summit with President Clinton. "We are against Nato's plans for eastward expansion. Their realisation will deliver a direct blow to our security," he said.

● Mr Yeltsin has appointed his liberal chief of staff, Anatoly Chubais, as first deputy prime minister, a move likely to boost further free-market economic reforms. The appointment of Mr Chubais, mastermind of the plan to privatise state assets, signals the first of a series of promised dramatic changes in the Russian government.



One man and his dog . . . Benny Crampes rescues a dog last week after flood waters resulting from fierce storms forced homes to be evacuated in Lebanon Junction, Kentucky PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID PHILLIP

Anti-Saddam alliance set to break up

Kathy Evans

THE Iraqi National Congress, the main umbrella organisation of political parties opposed to President Saddam Hussein, is verging on collapse, say many members.

The organisation, which operates largely from premises in Marble Arch, central London, has been racked recently by disputes over its leadership, infighting between the two main Kurdish parties, and disagreements over the strategy to be pursued against the Iraqi regime. Its demise would present an enormous propaganda bonus to the Iraqi leadership.

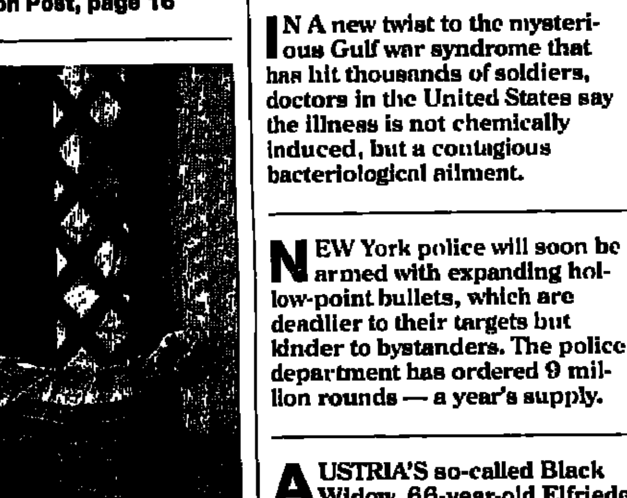
Much of the wrangling has centred on the Iraqi financier who has headed the INC since 1992, Ahmed Chalabi. Members have long accused Mr Chalabi of running it in an autocratic style and transforming a national resistance effort into a platform for his personal ambitions. Two years ago, growing discontent over his leadership led to a wave of resignations of member groups, including the Islamic al Dawa party, the Iraqi Democratic Union and the Arab Nationalist Party.

Other members are raising questions about the secrecy surrounding its accounts. Officially, Iraqis are said to be the main source of finance, but most believe the INC is funded by Washington and other Western and Arab governments.

In the early eighties, Mr Chalabi faced charges of embezzlement in Jordan after the collapse of the Petra Bank, of which he was chairman. He denies the charges, which he says were politically motivated following pressure from President Saddam.

The INC wrangling has prompted reports that the United States administration is now switching support to another exile group, the Iraqi National Accord, based in Jordan. It is dominated by army officers and former members of the Iraqi Ba'ath Party, which sustains President Saddam in power.

The Week



TWO people died and nearly 30 were injured when a bomb thought to have been planted on a bus by militant Muslim separatists from the far west of China exploded during rush hour in a busy shopping street in Beijing.
Washington Post, page 15

TURKEY'S first Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, has agreed to sign a list of measures designed to stamp out Muslim fundamentalism, according to the country's military-dominated National Security Council.

AN unnamed United States diplomat has been expelled from Germany for spying after trying to recruit a senior government official to gain information on hi-tech projects.
Washington Post, page 15

THE Swiss president, Arnold Koller, announced a plan to establish a $5 billion foundation for the victims of catastrophes, poverty, genocide or severe human rights violations, such as the Holocaust.
Washington Post, page 16

IN A new twist to the mysterious Gulf war syndrome that has hit thousands of soldiers, doctors in the United States say the illness is not chemically induced, but a contagious bacteriological ailment.

NEW York police will soon be armed with expanding hollow-point bullets, which are deadlier to their targets but kinder to bystanders. The police department has ordered 9 million rounds — a year's supply.

AUSTRIA'S so-called Black Widow, 66-year-old Elfriede Blauensteiner, who is alleged to have poisoned up to a dozen people in an 11-year period, was jailed for life for the murder of her former lover, Alois Pichler, aged 77.

SINGAPORE'S high court found an opposition politician, Tang Liang Hong, guilty of libelling the prime minister, Goh Chok Tong, and other ruling party members during an election campaign in December.

MICHAEL MANLEY, former prime minister of Jamaica, died, aged 72, from prostate cancer on the same day that President Cheddi Jagan of Guyana, another legendary Caribbean leader, died at the age of 78.
Obituary, page 11

THE revelation that an acclaimed Aboriginal artist, Eddie Burrup, is really an elderly white woman has provoked outrage among art dealers and Aboriginal artists. Burrup was revealed to be Elizabeth Durack, aged 82, a Western Australian painter descended from Irish settlers.

Court rules against holy fiat by father

Phil Goodwin in Islamabad

IN A dramatic judicial step both for Pakistan and for a young couple whose story has gripped the country, the High Court in Lahore on Monday ruled that a marriage based on love and contracted without parental permission is valid and in keeping with the teachings of Islam.

"I feel as if I am reborn," said Saima Waheed, the young bride who chose the man she wanted to marry, against tradition. "This verdict proves that one can still get justice in Pakistan and that the rights granted to women in Islam and our constitution are genuine."

Ms Waheed, aged 22, has lived in a shelter for women in Lahore for nearly a year while her father tried to have her marriage to Arshad Ahmad declared invalid.

"Eventually we got justice," Mr Ahmad said. "It shows that the young also have rights."

Theirs has been a story of true love and a family ripped apart, which has also exposed the deep divisions in Pakistan about the rights of women under Islamic law. As the case dragged on, hardline religious groups tried to rally support against the couple.

For 11 months Saima has lived apart from her husband in the shelter, after her father, Abdul Waheed Ropri, filed suit to have the marriage declared void. The High Court ruled that the wedding had been valid and the couple could live together.

When Saima fell in love with Arshad, a college lecturer, and decided to marry him last year, she went to her father to ask for permission. He refused, so she ran away and married anyway. She said that when she told her father about the wedding, he locked her in a room in the house. The family divided into two camps. Saima says she escaped and went to the women's refuge, fearing for her safety if she returned.



Saima Waheed (right) with her lawyer, Asma Jehanghir, in Lahore after Monday's ruling
PHOTOGRAPH: MOHSIN RAZA

Germans question monetary union

Denis Staunton in Berlin and Ian Traynor in Bonn

A SENIOR adviser to Chancellor Helmut Kohl last weekend called on him to admit that Germany would not pass the test this year for a single European currency and urged a delay in the launch of European Monetary Union.

But as Herbert Hax — head of the "five wise men" panel of economists who act as advisers to the government — added his voice to the growing chorus of EMU-scepticism in Germany, Mr Kohl tried to silence the doubters, declaring that Germany would meet the single-currency criteria and that the euro would be launched on schedule in 1999.

Professor Hax agreed with the expert view, which is consistently denied by the government, that Germany would miss the two key EMU targets this year — keeping the budget deficit at or under 3 per cent of gross domestic product and limiting state debt to 60 per cent of gross domestic product.

"Either you weaken the criteria or Germany will be ready for the euro later," he told the Bild am Sonntag tabloid paper. "The politicians in charge have unfortunately made talk of postponement a taboo. But the truth is simple: stability is more important than the timetable."

The dissident statement from a source close to the government dealt a strong blow to Mr Kohl's credibility in refusing to countenance an EMU setback.

But the chancellor reiterated his determination to see the euro launched on time. "We will stick to both the agreed launch date and the convergence criteria," he said in Berlin last weekend. He added that the single currency would be "strong and stable".

Germany's jobless figure of 4.7 million is putting a huge strain on public finances. Most economists predict that this year's budget deficit will exceed the 3 per cent ceiling.

Mr Kohl's woes were compounded by striking miners who occupied pits and blocked motorways in protest at the government's plans to slash mining subsidies as part of its drive to get the public finances fit for the single currency.

More than 5,000 miners demonstrated in the Saarland, near the French border, last weekend and blocked the motorway to Luxembourg. Miners rallied in Düsseldorf to denounce the government's plans to cut subsidies to around one-third of their current level over the next eight years, a scheme they say would cost more than half of the mining sector's 90,000 jobs. They also blocked the motorway into the Netherlands.

The government's hopes of gaining cross-party support for wide-ranging tax reforms were also set back when the opposition social democrats abandoned the negotiations last Saturday in protest at the cuts in the mining subsidies.

The political and economic élite is overwhelmingly enthusiastic about EMU, with 85 per cent of leading politicians and businessmen supporting it.

● Mr Kohl hurriedly invited Turkey's Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, to Bonn last week after an eruption of Turkish anger at the German chancellor's sudden snub to their country's European Union ambitions.

While Turkish officials said Mr Kohl had "deceived and betrayed" them and that Turkey was in "a state of shock", Mr Kohl maintained a public silence on comments made by his European political allies that Turkey had no chance of joining the EU.

At a meeting in Brussels of the European People's Party, an alliance of European Christian Democratic parties led by Chancellor Kohl and including six EU heads of government, several participants said Turkey would not be allowed to join the EU, despite 34 years of negotiations and several agreements between Ankara and Brussels.

Rebels defiant

Continued from page 1

abandonment by central government. So he puts on a brave face and claims that despite the rebels' sweeping successes over the past five months they will meet their match in his dilapidated city. "They wanted to take Kisangani for a long time . . . But we are still here and we will defend the city," he said.

The rebels claim to have surrounded the capital of northern Zaire. The army says the insurgents are still 50km away. Either way, the government's desperation is showing. In a reversal last week, it agreed to a UN peace plan in the hope of securing an immediate ceasefire.

Last weekend the rebel leader, Laurent Kabila, also agreed in principle to the UN proposals for negotiations and elections. But he again ruled out a ceasefire until President Mobutu and the government agree to resign. In the meantime Mr Kabila's forces press on towards the once grand city.

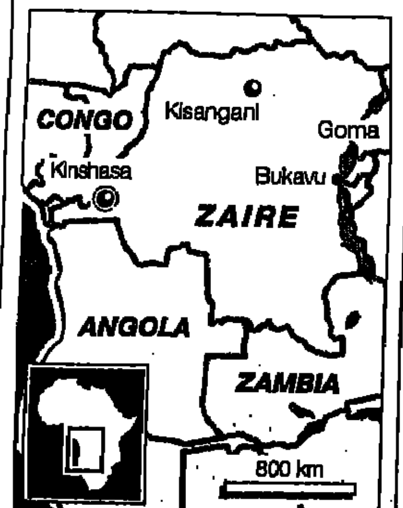
While the rebel Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire may face resistance as it moves on its biggest prize yet, few in Kisangani think the army will fight for long.

The army operations commander in the city, General Kalume Numbi, appears to be trusting to luck more than reason. "Something could change, just like that, and the Zairean army will be victorious," he said hopefully. But all the signs are that he is preparing for defeat.

In January, military equipment crowded into the airport and city ahead of an army counter-offensive that the government promised would be devastating and final. Within days the rebels had subdued the attack.

Often the stiffest resistance to the rebels has come from soldiers of Rwanda's defeated Hutu army, which retreated into Zaire three years ago after committing genocide against Tutsis. The Hutus have most to fight for — further defeat might mean extermination or imprisonment in Rwanda — but even they appear to be losing heart after their top two commanders fled Kisangani last week.

The remaining Serb mercenaries help keep order, sometimes brutally, among Zairean soldiers who pillaged and raped as they retreated into Kisangani. Only determined resistance by some residents, and the dispatch of disciplined troops from Kinshasa, halted a similar rampage through the city. Hundreds of soldiers deserted. Some escaped down river, others discarded their uniforms and took off into the forest.



Ethnic strife in Indonesia

John Aglionby in Jakarta

ETHNIC cleansing of migrants is continuing unabated in the Indonesian province of West Kalimantan, despite a peace treaty being signed by community leaders.

Dismas Aji of a Catholic research foundation, Komunikasi Sosial, in Pontianak, the province's capital, said last week that sporadic clashes had erupted between the indigenous Dayaks and migrants from Madura since an agreement to end the two months of violence was reached on February 18.

"I know of at least 20 people who have been killed in the last week alone. The majority of Madurese have either left the interior or are seeking refuge at military bases," he said. "The élite may have signed peace, but the general community does not think about peace."

He said "thousands" of Madurese had probably died in the clashes that began at the end of December, 7,000 were still seeking refuge with the military and at least 3,000 had returned to Madura, an island off northeast Java.

In Jakarta, the Indonesian Youth Forum said 1,200 people were missing in three of the 12 affected districts in the province.

The latest unrest was triggered by the stabbing of two Dayak youths during a brawl over a woman at a folk concert, but observers said the real cause was decades of Dayak resentment at being marginalised. Masri Sareb Putra, an ethnologist, said: "This is really a conflict about land."

Basque strike call fails

Adela Gooch in Madrid

BASQUES defied a strike call by separatists on Friday last week in a tacit show of repulsion at the use of violence by the separatist group ETA.

A police show of force on the streets ensured that shops, factories and schools stayed open in big cities. In smaller towns more susceptible to intimidation, some businesses and schools closed and people stayed at home.

The Madrid government declared the strike a failure and said it showed Basques' rejection of ETA.

There were 60 arrests, mainly of pickets organised by Herri Batasuna, ETA's political wing, which called the strike, ostensibly in protest at the Basque economic situation.

In fact, the stoppage was designed to capitalise on unrest created by a spate of ETA attacks that have resulted in six deaths this year, and to moves by the supreme court to imprison Herri Batasuna's leadership committee.

Nineteen of its 25 members are now in jail. The remainder are in Belgium. So far, the Spanish government has not made a request for their extradition, averting a row with Belgium, which has in the past refused to extradite ETA members.

The run-up to the strike was complicated by a Basque court decision to free a member of ETA's youth movement, who had admitted killing two policemen. The jury said he was drunk and therefore not in control of his actions. The case was one of the first to be tried by a jury in the Basque Country. Its verdict, which will be contested, has caused an outcry.

At the last election, Herri Batasuna's vote slipped below 12 per cent, continuing a steady decline that began at the start of the decade as Basques achieved more autonomy.

Vanishing forests creep back

John Hooper in Rome

THE tide of fortune may at last be turning for the world's battered forests. A United Nations study shows that they are being cut down at a slower rate and, in some areas, are becoming more extensive.

The study, published last week by the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), found that the rate of global deforestation had slowed down in the five years to the end of 1995. In Europe and — for the first time — in North America there were more trees than five years earlier.

But the FAO's assistant director-general for forestry, David Harcharik, said there were doubts about the precision of the statistical methods used. Even if the figures were right, they meant that in just five years the world had lost an area of woodland twice the size of Italy.

"That is still a very high rate," he stressed. "We are optimistic that we are going in the right direction. But we still have a long, long way to go."

The Rome-based body's report* concludes that in 1995 natural woodlands and plantations covered about 3.5 billion hectares (8.6 billion acres) — 26.6 per cent of the world's total land area excluding Greenland and Antarctica. That was after a net drop since 1990 of 56.3 million hectares. In Europe, woodland has been growing since the 1950s. One factor, the report says, is the removal from production of agricultural land, which is then afforested. Another is the collapse of communism, which had played havoc with Russian forests.

"The physical problems associated with the economic transition have caused a sharp drop in removals that in 1995 fell to about 110 million cubic metres," the report said. The main threats to European forests are now fires, which rob the Mediterranean countries of hundreds of thousands of hectares every year, and pollution. The Chernobyl nuclear disaster alone is estimated to have contaminated 7 million hectares of woodland in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia.

The most encouraging news has come from the United States where, after two centuries of almost continuous decline, the area covered by forest stabilised in the early 1990s.

Throughout the developing world, however, the picture remains sombre. An earlier FAO study, for the period 1980-90, found that the immediate causes of deforestation varied:

- In Africa, the main cause was the spread of subsistence farming under pressure from population growth;
- In Latin America, it was government-planned activity, such as population resettlement, cattle ranching and the creation of hydroelectric reservoirs;
- In Asia, rural population pressure and centrally planned programmes both played key roles.

To reverse the trend, Mr Harcharik said, "There is going to have to be a decline in the population rate and increases in the rate of economic growth and the level of agricultural productivity."

But it was a task that was as important for the richer countries as it was for the poorer ones. Forestry management had a potential impact on climatic change, and it affected the supply of tropical woods and foods to the developed world and the introduction from the developing world of exotic pests and diseases.

*State of the World's Forests, 1997: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

Comment, page 10

Children die as US trade ban stifles Cuba

Victoria Brittain

THE United States trade embargo against Cuba has led to needless deaths, left hospitalised children lying in agony as essential drugs are denied them, and forced doctors to work with medical equipment at less than half efficiency because they have no spare parts for their machinery, according to an American study.

Health and nutrition standards have been devastated by the recent tightening of the 37-year-old US embargo, which includes food imports, a team of American doctors, research scientists and lawyers said after a year-long study of Cuba.

Cubans' daily intake of calories dropped by a third between 1989 and 1993, the American Association for World Health reports. There is widespread suffering and many needless deaths.

A humanitarian catastrophe has been averted, the report says, only by the high priority the Cuban government has given to health spending, despite a steadily worsening economic environment. Defence, culture, arts and administration have taken budget cuts to allow extra spending on health.

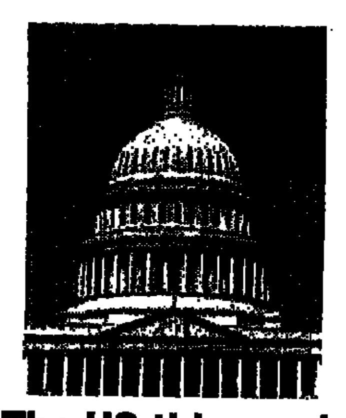
Dr Peter Bourne, who headed the American team, was the health adviser to President Carter. Speaking at the report's British publication last week, Dr Bourne revealed that the White House had been on the verge of lifting the embargo in 1977, but drew back when Havana sent a military force to aid the new revolutionary government in Ethiopia.

Cuba's isolation has been made worse since last year by the US government's Helms-Burton Act, which deters foreign investment at a time when the situation in the country is already "beyond description", Dr Bourne said.

Child cancer sufferers are some of the most distressing victims of the embargo, which bans Cuba from buying nearly half of the new world-class drugs in a market dominated by US manufacturers.

In response to growing realisation in the US that the embargo violates the United Nations charter, and the Geneva Conventions, and threatens the future of the World Trade Organisation, a bipartisan congressional group is to introduce legislation this month to lift the ban on food and drugs.

Dollars lead the White House a merry dance



The US this week

Martin Walker

THE CAMPAIGN finance embarrassments of the Clinton administration suddenly leapt forward last week to envelop Hillary Clinton and also to threaten Vice-President Al Gore's hopes of the succession, as claims were made that he had broken with all precedent to raise money personally and become "solicitor-in-chief" for the Clinton-Gore campaign.

Gore was credited with raising "at least $40 million" of the $180 million gathered by the Democratic National Committee (DNC) over the past two years, the Washington Post claimed in a front-page report by Bob Woodward, whose Watergate reports 24 years ago helped topple the Nixon presidency. Some of the donors told the Washington Post anonymously that they found Gore's tactics "revolting", and that "there were elements of a shakedown" in the ruthlessness of his pitch for funds.

One anonymous donor, who said he had given $100,000 after Gore's call, explained: "For a vice-president, particularly this vice-president who has real power and is the heir apparent, to ask for money gave me no choice . . . I have so much business that touches on the federal government — the telecommunications act, tax policy, regulations galore."

The hitherto unsullied Gore then made a rare and surprise appearance before the White House press corps to assert that he had done nothing wrong in raising funds for the Clinton re-election campaign. He was "proud of what I did", but would not do it again, and it all showed the need for campaign finance reform. "To be successful is to play by the rules as they exist."

The Clinton-Gore effort has emerged as a classic example of supply and demand. Clinton took care of the supply, hosting the coffee mornings, lunches and dinners, and offering a range of White House perks, from overnight stays to seats in the presidential box at the Kennedy Centre. Gore took personal charge of the demand side of the operation.

Mrs Clinton, it now seems, organised the book-keeping. Republican congressmen last week published an internal White House memorandum on a computer database of potential donors which carried the First Lady's handwritten approval. The memo suggested that the White House database, financed by $1.7 million in public funds to collate the names and addresses on the president's Christmas card, guest and contact list, be merged with the DNC's database that carries the names of potential donors.

"This sounds promising. Please advise, HRC," read Mrs Clinton's comment on the June 1994 memo from Marsha Scott, chief of staff in the White House office of presidential personnel.

The Republicans are hoping almost desperately that the latest fuss over Gore and Mrs Clinton will finally reach a kind of critical mass of public outrage. So far, chiefly because the public seems to see the entire affair as politics-as-usual, there has been little dent in the president's poll ratings, which are still unusually high, at close to 60 per cent approval.

"This has clearly become the most systematic effort to get around the law that we have seen since Watergate," charged the Republican Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, whose own moral standing is not high after he admitted that he misled the House ethics committee in his own case.

Republicans insist that the political use of public assets such as the White House database is illegal, and are to subpoena Ms Scott to face questioning by the House committee on government reform. This is one of three congressional inquiries, and one Justice Department probe, into the fund-raising scandal, which is now dwarfing the old Whitewater affair as a political threat to the Clinton administration and to Gore's hopes of succeeding to the presidency in 2000.

"I think it is very serious for Mrs Clinton," said Republican Congressman David McIntosh, a former aide to President Reagan and to Vice-President Dan Quayle, who is chairing the probe into the database affair. "It troubles me deeply that Mrs Clinton, a very bright lawyer, saw no problem with using taxpayer funds to aid the political operations of the DNC."

Such political use of the database certainly contravened the legal advice given to presidential staff by the then White House counsel, Abe Mikva. "The simplest rule to follow is the commonsense practice that anything obviously political that involves the use of resources should be done by the campaign, even if

Republicans hope the latest fuss over Gore and Mrs Clinton will provoke outrage

doing it here can be legally justified," Mikva wrote. That formal advice has already gravely embarrassed Gore, who has now admitted making "about 50" fund-raising calls from his White House office, even though he used a DNC credit card to pay for the calls.

Mrs Clinton had earlier denied involvement in the design and preparation of the database, but the memo to her and her handwritten note suggest that she was far more in touch with the matter than she acknowledged three months ago, when she told a press conference: "I would doubt I was the person who ordered it."

"Let my team work with the DNC to help them design a system that will meet our needs and technical specifications," Marsha Scott wrote in the memo. "Cloning or duplicating database systems is not difficult if carefully planned by a good design team."



Scott's memo was addressed to the First Lady, to deputy chief of staff Harold Ickes, and to Bruce Lindsey, the president's old Arkansas law partner and personal fixer in the White House. Lindsey was named "an unindicted co-conspirator" in one of the criminal cases filed last year, by Whitewater special prosecutor Kenneth Starr. The memo, which was marked "confidential", originated like so many of the other damaging documents published in recent days, from the treasure trove of files taken from his White House office by Ickes when he was passed over for promotion.

Ickes, the man who has plunged the Clinton presidency into its latest and most threatening scandal, was once the most devoted of Clinton's *consiglieri*, loyal to a friendship that went back to Ickes's youth as a leader of the New Left. But last month, without consulting the White House and without the compulsion of a subpoena, Ickes handed over to Republican investigators 500 pages of documents about the Clinton campaign's fund-raising. That first salvo of files contained one explosive memorandum, an appeal from chief fund-raiser Terry McAuliffe for the president to make himself, his dinner table and White House available to big donors.

"Yes — pursue all 3 and promptly" was the telltale comment in Bill Clinton's curiously childlike handwriting. "And get other names at 10,000 or more, 50,000 or more."

"Ready to start overnights right away," the president added, the first proof that he had launched the plan to seduce the biggest donors with nights in the Lincoln bedroom of the White House, turning a national shrine into the first hotel where the guests have to leave a mint.

Then, with Washington buzzing with the rumour that he was taking his revenge for being passed over for the top job of chief of staff, Ickes handed another 5,000 documents to the Republican investigators. The one they seized upon was an internal DNC memo faxed to Ickes from its first recipient, Martha Phipps. It was a 10-point shopping list of the presidential perks that should be offered to the biggest campaign donors. And it included the palpably illegal suggestion that appointments to federal boards and commissions should be "co-ordinated" with the fund-raising strategy.

This will not be a smoking gun for Clinton until and unless it is shown that he knew of this memo, or acted upon it. In the White House, the question was essentially personal: why had Ickes betrayed not only his friends the Clintons, and his colleagues in the campaign and the administration, but also the Democratic party in which he had been raised?

Ickes was born with the political equivalent of a silver spoon in his mouth, as the son of the Harold Ickes, who was Franklin Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior and one of

Harold Ickes insists 'Clinton is my friend' and denies betraying the president

the prime movers of the New Deal. Born in 1939, he went to Stanford university in the early 1960s, and became radicalised by the Freedom Riders, who volunteered to help desegregate the South. A leading member of the Students for a Democratic Society, Ickes was a full-time activist in the campaign against the Vietnam war. He first met Hillary Clinton — and much of the current Clinton administration — in Senator Eugene McCarthy's 1968 presidential campaign.

Beaten bloody by the Chicago cops at the traumatic Democratic party convention in 1968, Ickes buckled down to Columbia law school in New York. He first met the young Bill Clinton in Washington in the summer of 1970, when they both worked on Operation Pursestrings. Part of the respectable wing of the anti-war movement, it was a lobbying effort to persuade Congress to starve the war of funds. At the time, Ickes was dating Susan Thomases, who was to become Hillary Clinton's closest political friend and constant adviser during the first two years in the White House. Throughout the 1992 campaign, Thomases, like Ickes a New York-based lawyer, was Mrs Clinton's travelling companion, cruelly lampooned by Joe Klein in his thinly disguised novel of the campaign, Primary Colors.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Ickes became a power in New York state politics, always on the party's left wing. He organised the state for George McGovern's presidential campaign in 1972, specialised as a lawyer in defending the labour unions, was a close political ally of Jesse Jackson and became his campaign manager in Jackson's 1988 presidential bid. It was a surprise to many on the left when Ickes signed up to join the campaign of the Southern centrist candidate Bill Clinton in 1991. But Clinton and Ickes, like Hillary and Susan Thomases, had stayed in close touch. As well as organising the key primary in New York State, Ickes was always there to reassure party and media liberals that Clinton was still, deep-down, one of them, but who understood the tactics required to win elections.

After the 1992 election, Ickes was asked to pick and organise the White House staff, but Republicans in Congress threatened embarrassing public hearings into the mafia links of the trade unions he had defended as a lawyer. It took more than a year — and the sudden need for a ruthless damage controller to deal with Whitewater — for a place to be found for him in the White House. Along with George Stephanopoulos, Ickes was the voice of the liberal-left, and his main service to Clinton was to talk and flatter Jackson out of mounting a challenge from the left in the 1996 primaries.

Ickes insists that "Bill Clinton is my friend", and rejects any suggestion that he has betrayed the president by releasing the piles of documents. They simply show, he maintains, the reality of political campaigns for decades, that an incumbent White House is always intimately involved in the process.

"I agree that from the public's point of view, it doesn't look great or smell great. But that's our system," Ickes said last week. "Money is critical. That was one of my charges and I was damned if I would fall down on the money-raising. We didn't break the law, but we didn't protect the president either."

Despite the widespread mutterings of "betrayal" among White House staff, presidential spokesman Mike McCurry insists there is "no bad blood". Indeed, there is a theory that Ickes's last service to his old friend the president was to put into practice the lesson of the Watergate scandal — that it is the cover-up that hurts, and if embarrassing documents do exist flush them all out early so the headlines never get any worse. But then the headlines are bad enough already.

DNA links skull to living man

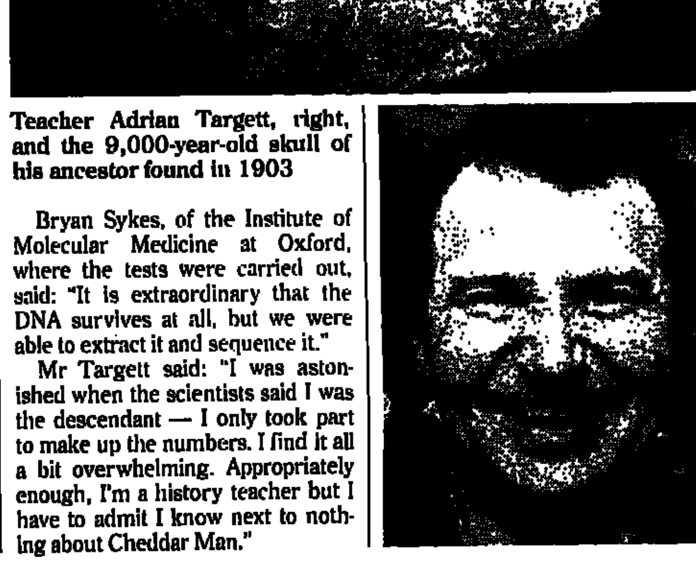
AS FOSSIL experts last week celebrated a feat of science in recovering human DNA from a Stone Age skull found in Cheddar Gorge, a mild-mannered teacher was coming to terms with being branded the direct descendant of the caveman, *writes Chris Mihill.*

Scientists used state-of-the-art DNA techniques to establish a genetic link between Cheddar Man — aged 9,000 and the oldest complete skeleton found in Britain — and history teacher Adrian Targett, aged 42.

The remains of the Stone Age hunter-gatherer were unearthed in Somerset's Cheddar Caves during drainage work in 1903. Scientists from Oxford university, together with colleagues from the Natural History Museum in London, spent months running DNA tests on the bones. They then took samples from scores of staff and pupils at Kings of Wessex Community School in an attempt to establish a link between the Mesolithic man and his modern counterparts.

The tests were performed for a TV series on archaeology in Somerset, Once Upon A Time In The West. Producer Philip Priestley said: "We took samples from children and teachers at Cheddar school and people whose families we knew had been in the area for generations. There are no ifs or buts. The results make it 100 per cent certain the two men are linked through a female line of descent."

The well-preserved skeleton was discovered in the largest of 100 caverns in Cheddar Gorge — Britain's prime site for Palaeolithic human remains — and is now in the Natural History Museum.



Teacher Adrian Targett, right, and the 9,000-year-old skull of his ancestor found in 1903

Bryan Sykes, of the Institute of Molecular Medicine at Oxford, where the tests were carried out, said: "It is extraordinary that the DNA survives at all, but we were able to extract it and sequence it."

Mr Targett said: "I was astonished when the scientists said I was the descendant — I only took part to make up the numbers. I find it all a bit overwhelming. Appropriately enough, I'm a history teacher but I have to admit I know next to nothing about Cheddar Man."

'Career paedophile' jailed

David Ward

A SENIOR social worker described as a career paedophile was jailed for 18 years last week after being found guilty of 15 charges of sexually abusing children at homes in Cheshire and Cambridgeshire over a period of more than 20 years.

Keith Laverack, aged 52, was convicted, mainly on majority verdicts, of 11 charges of buggery and four of indecent assault on children aged 11 to 16. Chester crown court heard that he had preyed on the "lost boys" in his care like Captain Hook in Peter Pan.

Laverack, of Wilburton, Cambridgeshire, denied all the charges and was found not guilty of six offences by a jury of eight women and four men which took more than eight hours to reach its verdicts.

He is the eighth man to be jailed in a series of trials which have followed a three-year investigation by Cheshire police into paedophile activities in three homes in the county.

Judge Huw Daniel, who said he could not remember so bad a case, passed sentences totalling 78 years, many of them to run concurrently.

He told Laverack: "You abused your position of power, the position of trust which you held, in the worst possible way."

He said Laverack had buggered children at every opportunity that presented itself.

Detective Inspector Terry Oates, who led the team which traced Laverack's career of abuse, said: "I am absolutely delighted with the verdicts. It is justification for the victims. This man has been a paedophile for most of his career."

From 1965 to 1970, Laverack was employed as a science teacher and houseparent at Liverpool city council's Greystone Heath community home in Warrington, Cheshire. Ten of the charges dated from his time there, the rest from his long stay in East Anglia.

He taught at Kneesworth House, a school for intelligent but disruptive boys in Cambridgeshire, from 1970 to 1974 when he became warden of the Midfield assessment centre near Cambridge. All three homes have now closed.

Until now, gagging orders have prevented the media from reporting full details of cases resulting from the Cheshire investigation for fear of prejudicing a fair trial.

In addition to the eight men, including Laverack, jailed for serious sexual offences in homes in Cheshire, three other paedophiles have received sentences of up to 15 years for offences at homes on Merseyside. Another man died before he could be arrested.

Royals enter cyberspace

THE idea was first mooted as an April Fool's Day joke in the Guardian last year. But the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and head of a commonwealth of 53 countries made a tentative bid to colonise cyberspace last week with the launch of *the* official royal web site, *writes Stuart Millar*.

Buckingham Palace promised a site offering a look at the monarchy as an institution and a behind-the-scene glimpse of the Windsors' family life. As she pressed the button during a visit to a school in northwest London, the royal coat-of-arms in regal red appeared over the words: "The British Monarchy — the Official Web Site" to applause from the 300 students.

But far from providing a cutting-edge development in the history of the Internet, the designers, Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency, avoided glitzy, interactive technology in favour of a site in keeping with the subject: conservative, strait-laced and well behind the times.

The royal site is at www.royal.gov.uk/

The Week in Britain James Lewis

Ashdown talks to Labour but rules out marriage

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS live in constant fear that their leader will stitch together some kind of a deal with Labour. So Paddy Ashdown felt it necessary to soothe their nerves again last week with an assurance that "a marriage or merger is not on the agenda now, and not on the agenda for any future I can conceive of".

Mr Ashdown does, however, advocate "co-operative politics". An early product of that approach was the publication of a joint agreement with Labour on a whole raft of constitutional reforms — to incorporate the European Convention of Human Rights into British law, to pass a Freedom of Information Act, to devolve power to Scotland and Wales, to give London an elected authority, to abolish the voting rights of hereditary peers, to elect the Scottish, Welsh and European parliaments by proportional representation, and to hold a referendum on general election voting systems.

These are aspirations on which both parties are agreed, and commitments on which Labour will act if it wins the general election. And if it wins with only a small majority, it can be sure of Liberal Democrat support for as long as it sticks to a promised referendum in which the electorate will be offered a choice between a proportional system of voting (yet to be decided) and the existing first-past-the-post system.

Tony Blair is "not persuaded" of the merits of PR which, he believes, hands small parties the power to make or break governments. Many — perhaps most — Labour MPs agree, mostly for reasons of self-interest. So there is a risk that if Labour wins with a landslide it could afford to ditch its commitment to PR.

Robin Cook , the shadow foreign secretary, and Labour's leading reformer, was bullish about the joint document. It was, he said, "an ambitious programme of reform which will be as important as any of the great reform parliaments of the last century".

IN AN attempt to show that Labour can be tougher than the Tories on juvenile crime, the shadow home secretary, Jack Straw, unveiled a six-point plan for punishing young offenders. Its centrepiece was the abolition of the medieval doctrine of *Doli Incapax*, which deems that the under-14s do not know the difference between right and wrong and, therefore, cannot be prosecuted.

Mr Straw would prosecute children as young as 10. He would also introduce compulsory parenting classes for those whose children are out of control, and tackle the problem of "persistent harassment" by detaining youngsters in secure units.

In a green paper on youth crime, the Home Secretary, Michael Howard targeted bad parents who, he said, could face criminal sanctions, including fines, driving bans, and curfews enforced by tagging, if they fail to comply with new "parental control orders". Mr Straw complained that the Home Secretary had pinched Labour's ideas.

Mary Honeyball, of the Association of Chief Probation Officers, was unimpressed. "Those parents who will not or cannot take responsibility for their children are unlikely to respond to punitive measures, which may increase domestic tension and result in the children being taken into care," she said.

AN IMMEDIATE donation of £50,000 was promised to back up a Roman Catholic cardinal's offer of practical and financial help for any woman who might otherwise choose to have an abortion.

Cardinal Thomas Winning, head of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, launched the open-ended appeal at a Glasgow conference organised by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children. The offer, he insisted, was not a stunt or a means of passing pregnant women on to anti-abortion groups, but a practical measure to dissuade them from entering the "gynaecological abattoirs".

A "steady stream" of calls came in response to the campaign, which the cardinal terms "this fundamental problem facing society". But a spokesman for the cardinal said "few, if any" of the women who telephoned had asked for money. Most of the calls were from women who simply wanted to talk about the decision they faced.

The campaigning group, A Woman's Right to Choose, thought the offer would make little difference, since financial considerations were only a small part of the reason women resorted to abortions.

THE Eurosceptic MP, Sir George Gardiner, who was deselected by his Reigate constituency party because of disloyalty to the Prime Minister, defected to Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party, which will put up candidates at the general election against all Tory MPs who do not agree with another referendum on membership of the European Union. Sir George is probably the only MP the Referendum Party will ever have.

Senior Tory sources privately dismissed his action as an act of vengeance, but the manner of his going, and his prediction of a Tory defeat at the election, reopened the party's internal tensions over Europe. Several former colleagues privately voiced support for him, and blamed the Prime Minister's refusal to give ground to the Eurosceptics for the Tories' present plight.



Blair points to danger of Labour complacency

Ewen MacAskill

TONY Blair, worried about growing complacency, warned the Labour party last week against becoming carried away with polls indicating a general election landslide.

In an attempt to calm the party in the wake of a climb in the polls to a lead of 26 points, he told the Scottish Labour conference in Inverness: "There is only one opinion poll that matters and that is the one on election day. Let us never forget that. I am, and remain, the eternal warrior against complacency."

In private, Labour MPs and officials have come around to the view that while the opinion poll lead will diminish in the run-up to election day, a majority of between 50 to 100 seats is no longer impossible. But they are alarmed that this attitude is seeping into the public domain.

Fearful of a repeat of the 1992 Sheffield rally in which Neil Kinnock's triumphalism cost votes, Mr Blair called on the party to guard against complacency.

"From now until the day of decision comes, we carry on as we have been doing, patiently, sensibly building up trust with the British people, with responsibility and humility. Even if we win, and I say 'if', there will be no victory dances. For then the hard work in serving our country will begin in earnest."

Although Mr Blair won a standing ovation, tension remains in the Scottish party, with remnants of the left still angry over the leadership's surprise decision last year to hold a referendum before introducing a Scottish parliament. They are resisting the ditching of traditional party policies.

But Mr Blair scored a significant victory in the election to the party's Scottish executive, when Blairites replaced leftwingers and nationalist-leaning members.

The Labour leader, hammering home the message that Labour is different from the Tories, said: "That we have had to set tough spending limits is not a tribute to the Tories' good housekeeping, it is a recognition of their utter incompetence.

"But the public sector spends £320 billion a year. Don't let anyone tell me we can't spend that money differently, and I will tell you how."

He then went on to list Labour's policies, ranging from abolition of the assisted places scheme in education through to ending tax relief for private medical insurance.



E. coli warning suppressed

Guardian Reporters

AN ALARMING unpublished report raised fears a year ago that poor slaughterhouse hygiene was increasing the risk of infection from the *E. coli* bacterium, which later killed 20 people in Scotland, it emerged last week.

The Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, was under pressure yet again on the issue of food safety as the Government was accused of suppressing it last March in the aftermath of the latest BSE crisis.

Bill Swann, the report's author, who was then with the Meat Hygiene Service, an agency of Mr Hogg's department, said: "I felt the report would have been of enormous benefit if it had been published."

Meat Hygiene Service inspectors visited all 450 abattoirs throughout Britain. Animals found at the slaughterhouses were covered in faeces which contain the *E. coli* organism. The report warned of "major contamination" of carcasses.

The month the report was due to be published coincided with ministers' first admission that there was a link between BSE and humans. Labour suspects that it may have been suppressed to avoid further damage to the meat industry.

Open warfare later broke out among ministers after the Scottish Office bluntly denied claims by Mr Hogg that he had informed it of a tough meat hygiene safety report.

Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, was described by one source as "incandescent with rage" that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food did not draw the report to the attention of Professor Hugh Pennington and his team investigating the *E. coli* outbreak in Lanarkshire which has claimed 20 lives.

Welsh secretary William Hague and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury William Waldegrave — a former agriculture minister — were both said to be furious at the breakdown in communication between different government departments, and the wider implications of the crisis spiralling out of control. But Downing Street stressed that Mr Hogg had the full backing of the Prime Minister.

In Brussels, news of the suppressed report angered the European Commission, which insisted that it had not been shown the study last year. Officials demanded that they be supplied with a copy as soon as possible.

Labour leader Tony Blair seized on the latest disaster to spell out Labour's plans for a powerful new independent food standards agency. He said he had asked the renowned food expert Professor Philip James to start work immediately on the remit of a Food Standards Agency.

● Three Valleys Water, which has told 300,000 households to boil their drinking water because of bacteria that have made more than 30 customers ill, could face prosecution if it is held to blame.

Tap water in a large part of north London has been infected with cryptosporidium bacteria, which sometimes gets into rivers in the faeces of farm animals. Barnet council is calling for a public inquiry into the crisis, which has closed five schools. An 80-year-old and two infants have been taken to hospital.

Comment, page 10



Major pans errant MP

Rebecca Smithers

THE Prime Minister last week unreservedly condemned insulting remarks made by the maverick Conservative MP, David Evans, whose Welwyn and Hatfield constituency organisation rallied to his support and endorsed him as "an excellent constituency MP".

Mr Evans prompted a political storm when he attacked Melanie Johnson, his Labour opponent, as a "single girl" with "three bastard children", while also criticising John Major and the Heritage Secretary, Virginia Bottomley, and making racist comments.

Later he apologised, saying the comments had been taken out of context. "I regret some of the things I said, and I apologise to the Prime Minister and to others for any embarrassment or offence which may have been caused," he said.

Mr Major, when asked whether he condemned the MP's comments "unreservedly and in their totality", said firmly: "Yes."

Mr Evans's remarks were made in answer to questions put to him by sixth-formers in his constituency. He said of Miss Johnson, a schools inspector and magistrate: "She's a single girl, lives with her boyfriend, three bastard children, lives in Cambridge, never done a proper job."

Mr Evans, aged 62 and a self-made millionaire, criticised John Major as "vindictive and not forgiving". He claimed that too many token women get into politics. "So then women get promoted, like Virginia Bottomley, who's dead from the neck upwards, right. I mean, she's been in the Cabinet simply because she's a woman."

But Mr Evans specifically refused to apologise to Ms Johnson for his comments about her children. "Whether you like it or not, they are bastards," he said.

Sleaze inquiry faces delay

David Hencke

LABOUR and the Liberal Democrats have decided against stepping up pressure for publication of the long-awaited inquiry into the cash-for-questions scandal. Although the report is said to be at an advanced stage, it may not be ready before the general election.

Sir Gordon Downey, the parliamentary commissioner for standards, is expected to submit his final report before the end of the month. But if John Major announces the date of the general election before, the Commons standards and privileges committee would not have time to consider it. In that case, it would probably be asked to keep the findings secret.

Three MPs, Neil Hamilton, Tim Smith and Michael Brown, could face suspension from the Commons if Sir Gordon finds they have broken rules in not declaring commissions and cash they may have received through Ian Greer, the lobbyist.

Meanwhile Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, has been cleared of allegations by Mohamed Al Fayed, the owner of Harrods, that he received up to £1 million in bribes to appoint inspectors to investigate Mr Al Fayed's takeover of House of Fraser from Tiny Rowland.

A report from Sir Gordon Downey says: "There are no grounds for believing that Michael Howard received payments ... these allegations have been current with sections of the media for some years. Unchecked, the rumours will continue to ferment. In the public interest ... these allegations should, so far as possible, be authoritatively and publicly dismissed."

Women talking dirty on the back bench

COMMONS SKETCH
Simon Hoggart

NO FEWER than seven Labour women sat in line along the backmost bench. They seemed huddled together for security, as if at a party and about to begin dancing round their handbags, half-hoping, half-fearing that some of the spotty louts opposite might dare join them.

David Evans, the Tory MP for Hatfield, was not present. Nevertheless he was nearby. He had spent the day apologising for the remarkable remarks he made to schoolchildren in his constituency. He apologised to the Prime Minister, to the Chief Whip, and was even seen having a word with the Speaker, one of the few parliamentarians for whom he had not had a harsh word.

He had sent what she called a "very gallant and elegant" apology to Virginia Bottomley, though how you apologise elegantly to someone you have described as "dead from the neck upwards ... in the Cabinet simply because she's a woman", I do not know.

Did he claim that he was misquoted? "I really meant to say you were 'dead gorgeous' from the neck upward", or "I said you were only in the Cabinet because you were a woman — a woman of rare and cherishable talents"?

How did he cringe to the Prime Minister? "When I said you were vindictive and not forgiving, well, you know what it's like when you're with a bunch of schoolkids, you've had a few Tangos and a Hob-nob, the tape recorder seems miles away — well, inches away — don't need to draw a picture, narramean?"

No doubt Mr Major consoled him, reminding Mr Evans of the amusing way he himself had poured scorn on so many of his colleagues via tape recorders: "bastards ... flapping of white coats..."

"Could happen to anyone, David old man. Now put your mind at ease while I phone your constituency chairman and tell him that if he doesn't get rid of you now he can kiss goodbye to his MBE."

Alice Mahon rose on a point of order and declared that Mr Evans had "maligned women in general, had been particularly insulting to women MPs ... Is there a committee to which this could be referred?"

The Speaker said there wasn't. "I am not responsible for speeches made outside this House. I have enough to do keeping my ears open to what is said inside."

The sisterhood stirred collectively and uneasily. Audrey Wise asked whether, if the Prime Minister wanted to make a statement about the "disreputable remarks of his honourable friend", time would be made available.

Betty said that it would. She was far too courteous to point out that Mr Major was roughly as likely to ask for parliamentary time to deliver a stripogram to Mrs Wise. But that was never the point. The girls were just enjoying talking dirty.

In Brief

THE LORD Chancellor, Lord Mackay, unlawfully barred the way to justice for low-income litigants when he abolished their right to have High Court fees waived, judges ruled, forcing the Government to suspend fees immediately and to offer to refund fees of thousands of pounds paid since January 15.

HORRETT CAMPBELL, the paranoid schizophrenic who attacked a group of schoolchildren with a machete last July, has been detained indefinitely in a secure mental hospital.

THE Stormont talks on the Northern Ireland peace process have been suspended until after the general election. The talks, which failed to agree any decommissioning of weapons, are to resume on June 3.

THE DAILY MAIL will not be prosecuted for contempt of court after naming five unconvicted men as the killers of murdered student Stephen Lawrence, the Attorney General announced.

LOUISE WOODWARD, an 18-year-old British nanny, pleaded not guilty to the first degree murder of a baby in her care in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

THE global audience for the BBC World Service has grown to 143 million listeners each week, an increase of 3 million on last year's figure.

THE Government is being taken to the High Court for allegedly breaching its own rules by approving the supply of military and police equipment to Indonesia despite evidence it had been used to suppress political demonstrations.

THE Guardian won four prizes at the annual British Press Awards, including that for team reporting, for Ed Vulliamy's international reports, and for David Lacey's sports writing.

JIMMY AIRLIE, the union hero of the Clydeside shipyards, has died at the age of 60.

SIR MARTIN Furnival Jones, head of the Secret Intelligence Service during the sixties at a time of intense paranoia about Soviet espionage activities in Britain, has died aged 84.

THE SPICE GIRLS, whose album Spice has sold 8 million copies worldwide, have become the first group to have four number one hits in the UK with their first four releases.

SCIENTISTS who cloned Dolly the lamb from a cell from the udder of an adult sheep admitted that determined researchers could use the technique to "photocopy" humans within two years.

Tories to launch assault on education

John Carvel

JOHN MAJOR is to try to lift the Conservatives' rock-bottom ratings in the pre-election opinion polls by launching a fierce attack on Labour's competence to deliver the improvements in education which Tony Blair has identified as his top priority.

The Government is using publication of the first national league tables of primary school performance in England this week to blame Labour local authorities for the poor standards of reading, writing and arithmetic achieved by 11-year-olds in thousands of mainly inner-city schools.

Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, has prepared a version of the statistics to show how Labour was responsible for almost all the worst-performing primary schools — including eight in Birmingham which could not get more than 13 per cent of pupils to the English target standard.

But it is not clear whether her arguments will cut any ice with the voters, since the trouncing of the Tories in recent local elections has left the party in control of only five education authorities.

The Conservative's London flagship authority of Wandsworth trailed in the rankings behind Labour administrations at Camden and Brent, which have often been demonised by the Tories. And the authority with the worst score for maths was the non-political City of London Corporation, where the sole primary school reached only 30 per cent of the required standard.

The school tables are being published by Whitehall at a cost to taxpayers of about £1.8 million. Mrs Shephard, who called the exercise "the biggest public information campaign since the second world war", stressed the achievements of church schools and grant-maintained primaries, which took 72 of the top 100 places.

David Blunkett, the shadow education secretary, said the tables — revealing that more than 40 per cent of 11-year-olds failed to reach the target standard for reading, writing and arithmetic — showed "the results of 18 years of Tory incompetence and inaction in tackling the basics in our schools and in teacher training".

He said Labour would launch a big national literacy drive to improve numbers reaching the standard in English from 57 per cent to 80 per cent by 2001 and to 100 per cent by 2006.

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said parents had more hope of winning the National Lottery than getting any useful information from the tables. "The exercise is flawed. Two or three children with flu can mean the difference between success or failure," he said.

Head over heels . . . Picasso's Téte de Femme, painted in 1939 and worth $1 million, was stolen from a central London gallery last week by a gunman who removed the picture in just 35 seconds

Pregnant IRA suspect to face assessment panel

Owen Bowcott

ROISIN McALISKEY, the pregnant IRA bombing suspect, was due to go before a panel of social workers, probation officers and prison staff in Holloway jail this week to assess whether she may keep her baby after it is born.

Although neither convicted nor charged, the daughter of Bernadette McAliskey, the former nationalist MP for Mid-Ulster, has been held for four months awaiting extradition to Germany. She is seven months pregnant and has been told she may not be allowed to use the mother and baby unit in Holloway because she is a high security, Category A inmate.

The interview this week comes amid growing political sensitivity over her case and confusion about the conditions she will be subjected to in the hospital maternity ward.

The German authorities want to question her about the IRA bombing of a British army barracks near Osnabrück last summer. She denies any involvement.

Ms McAliskey's case is without precedent. In the past, a few women inmates have been refused permission to keep their children with them after birth, but no Category A inmate has ever had a baby in prison.

Her mother said: "Roisin was told that her lawyer could not be present at this panel ... She is saying they are questioning her fitness to motherhood. If the decision goes against her, she will consider taking legal action."

Her access to visitors has been restricted. For the first few months her partner, Sean McCotter, was not permitted to hold hands with her. Exclusion of the press appears to defy a test case last year which overturned a blanket ban on journalists' visits.

The Conservative MP Hugh Dykes, a member of the British-Irish inter-Parliamentary Body, said last week: "There is a very strong case for her being moved immediately to appropriate high-grade hospital care within the prison supervision service ... Anything less would be outrageous and inhumane."

The German government has promised Ms McAliskey that if she was extradited she would be able to take her child with her.

Ms McAliskey, her mother and their solicitor, Gareth Peirce, maintain the prison authorities have told them she will have to wear a "closeting chain" on her ankle in hospital after the baby is born.

But the Prison Service insisted: "No prisoner who goes to hospital to give birth is cuffed in any way from the moment they enter until the moment they leave."

Bernadette McAliskey said: "We had been told that she would be restrained with an ankle chain after the birth. Perhaps they have changed their minds now?"

Care plan 'helps rich'

David Brindle and Teresa Hunter

MINISTERS are seeking to inject momentum into the Tories' social policy offensive after winning only a lukewarm reception for plans to encourage people to buy insurance so they do not have to sell their homes to pay for care.

The plans, presented as a bill to be enacted if the Tories are re-elected, came as the second stage of a three-pronged attack. Last week, ministers stole ground on Labour by proposing a new means of funding state pensions. Later this week, they were expected to publish a white paper setting out radical reform of what they perceive as unpopular local authority social services.

Monday's "partnership" insurance plans, however, drew only a cautious welcome as a step towards a bigger solution of the problem of funding care for elderly people.

Under the plans, foreshadowed in a green paper last year, people would be offered an incentive to insure themselves against the costs of long-term residential care.

At present, local authorities help with such costs under the community care system when a person's assets fall below £16,000. When they fall below £10,000, the state bears the entire costs.

According to government calculations, it would cost a typical 70-year-old man £5,400 to protect a £60,000 home.

Opposition parties and charities said the scheme would help only the better-off who could afford the hefty premiums. It offered nothing for people wishing to be cared for in their own homes.

Chris Smith, shadow health secretary, said: "Those who cannot afford to pay premiums — an estimated 19 out of 20 people — will still be facing the loss of their homes or a second-rate safety net if they need residential care."

Pension plan, page 12

HIV doctor denies misconduct

Sarah Boseley

PATRICK NGOSA, a hospital doctor accused of failing to protect his patients by ensuring he was not HIV positive after his former lover told him she had the virus, denied serious professional misconduct at a General Medical Council hearing on Monday.

Nicola Davis, QC, representing Dr Ngosa, who did not attend the hearing, said he admitted failing to take adequate steps to discover his HIV status after the woman, referred to as Mrs A, told him the result of her test.

Dr Ngosa is understood to be staying with relatives in Zambia.

Ms Davis accused the media of conducting "a witch hunt" against him and asked for an adjournment.

Dr Ngosa admits he had a sexual relationship with Mrs A for 19 months from May 1994 and that she told him she had been diagnosed HIV positive. He admitted that he denied having a sexual relationship with her on three occasions in June and July 1996.

The doctor accepted he did not take adequate steps to check to see if he had HIV in the light of Mrs A's diagnosis in May 1996, and he admitted he should have taken adequate steps to check his HIV status for the protection of patients.

Dr Ngosa qualified in Zambia in 1982. He worked in Britain between February 1991 and January 1997. Health authorities are trying to contact 1,752 women who underwent surgery in which he took part, and have a slight chance of being at risk. So far, nearly 7,000 women have contacted a telephone helpline.

Britain's dirty slaughterhouses

NOBODY-TOLD-ME is fast becoming the most over-worked excuse of this tired administration. Two weeks ago it was Nicholas Soames on the misuse of pesticides in the Gulf war. Last week it was the agriculture minister on the appalling state of British abattoirs. Like most lame excuses, it becomes less credible with each succeeding use. Given the fragile state of food safety in Britain, this latest ministerial failure to get a grip on the administrative machine seems almost unbelievable.

Consider the background. Britain's slaughterhouses have a notorious record of failing to meet minimum hygiene standards. At the beginning of this decade, nine out of 10 of the 900 abattoirs fell below the minimum standards set down by European Union inspectors and were barred from exporting meat to Europe. Three successive surveys by EU officials uncovered filthy and contaminated meat. Even the 10 per cent that were allowed to export their products were severely criticised by European inspectors. Compared with its northern European neighbours, Britain was incredibly slow in modernising abattoir procedures. But in the wake of successive food scandals, even ministers moved. Some abattoirs were forced to close and a Meat Hygiene Service was set up in April 1995, one purpose of which was to raise slaughterhouse standards.

A team of inspectors was assembled and all 450 remaining abattoirs were inspected. The reports from this £1 million exercise were collated into a 54-page overview of the state of British abattoirs. It revealed old habits still continued: dirty knives, offal bins not marked and, most serious of all, carcasses contaminated with faeces, posing a serious threat of *E.coli* poisoning. One of the authors of this last section of the report, Prof Bill Swann, a former official veterinary surgeon, said he was told to tone down his conclusions because the meat industry was already taking a battering over BSE. He refused but another member of the team did carry out modifications. According to ministers, the edited version, which remained an indictment of slaughterhouse practices, was a fairer representation of the inspection team members' views.

Even more dubious than the report's "doctoring" was the failure to make it available. John Major wanted it both ways last week, claiming the report had been widely distributed but then having to concede not even ministers had seen it because it was "a working paper". It was much more than that. It included more than 80 recommendations for improving food safety. Yet, despite the large sum invested, the department failed to notify MPs, failed to send it to key slaughterhouse officials, and failed to provide a copy for Professor Hugh Pennington, the head of the expert group investigating the recent outbreak of *E.coli* poisoning in Scotland. His own report may now have to be delayed while his team review the findings of the slaughterhouse inquiry.

Ministers shamelessly tried to suggest that the report had been published because anyone who had asked for it would have been sent one. This is on a par with introducing a fire alarm system that does not make a noise but will tell you if a fire is burning if you ring it up. It's another glaring example of the department putting producer before consumer interests. What is needed is not just more ministerial grip but a separate ministry of food so consumers are properly protected.

Last laugh for the chainsaw?

THE United Nations has been purring over last week's news that the rate of global deforestation is slowing, even reversing, after centuries of decline. Europe, North America, Australia and Japan are all leafier than they were 15 years ago. Fine. More bark equals more industrial bite, more renewable fuel supplies, jobs, paper, carbon dioxide, potential for conservation and leisure. But this week the equally authoritative World Resources Institute in Washington throws a different slant on the figures with a massive study of the world's old forests. Their scientists conclude that 80 per cent of wild or "frontier" forests are now destroyed or degraded and the only significant areas left are being heavily logged. It is, they say, an ecological and cultural tragedy. The two reports are not contradictory, even if we should beware of tree statistics.

What is happening is that mankind is relentlessly swapping primary forest for a new utilitarian version. Demand for both timber and land is growing rapidly, and new trade rules and poverty have together unleashed a global timber rush in the most biologically and culturally important areas. Guyana, Surinam, Siberia and other resource-rich, but cash-poor, places have little option but to sell for a song their one major natural resource to hungry logging conglomerates, even as the poor of Brazil or Africa clear the forest to survive. New model nature, though, is neither more socially nor more economically productive than the old. Where frontier forest, which supports 50 million people, is a repository of some of the last indigenous cultures, industrial plantations employ few people and encourage the insatiable use of resources and political inequity. What can be done? Five years ago, the environment groups sought a legally binding global convention on forests but were outmanoeuvred by countries such as Malaysia, Brazil, Finland and the United States, which agreed only to a set of watery "forest principles".

How things change. Now many main timber-growing countries want a convention, either to demonstrate that they are environmentally responsible or to ensure that it is weak enough to drive a cherry-picker through, while many of the most powerful non-government groups seek much tighter principles for sustainable forests. They point out that responsible management of forests would allow resources to be conserved and money earned over a much longer period of time. They may be right, but there is little money and much ideological disarray. That Brazil and the Worldwide Fund for Nature should, for once, be on the same side is dandy, but it points only to ultimate victory for the chainsaws.

The cost of a free nuclear lunch

WHERE THERE is nuclear power there will be nuclear waste. That is the simple truth underlined by this month's impressive anti-nuclear protest in northern Germany, as 30,000 police escorted a train conveying six waste containers to the intended storage site. The German public has been sensitive towards nuclear issues ever since the country became the prime European theatre for nuclear confrontation. The current protest against the shipment to Gorleben in Lower Saxony builds on similar efforts in previous years. It has aroused particular hostility in the local community, whose doubts are heightened by the temporary nature of the storage site: a nearby salt-mine is still being examined for permanent suitability. This is a familiar tale in other countries, including Britain, where storage is contemplated. The facilities are inadequate, the precautions untested, and the basic question remains unanswered: is there any way of guaranteeing that nuclear waste can be stored safely for the indefinite future?

The US energy department is nearing the end of a 14-year period, funded by a tax on the consumption of reactor-produced electricity, to achieve the safe disposal of high-grade radioactive waste. Last month it admitted that it would not be able to complete development of a suitable permanent site until 2010. The problem is compounded by the retirement of several reactors at an earlier date than expected, generating more nuclear waste. The British programme to build an underground waste depository at Sellafield will not be complete till 2015 at best: now the project is beset by new doubts that its safety can ever be fully guaranteed. And this plan is intended only to deal with low and intermediate-level waste. The search for a site for disposal of high-level waste has not even begun.

All of this adds up to the now familiar truth that in nuclear as in every other form of energy production there is no such thing as free consumption. The hidden costs are huge, and will continue to be paid for decades and even hundreds of years. Deep burial is probably the best solution — but its long-term safety requires absolute confidence both in the permanency of geological structures and the impermeability of all artificial or natural casings. Quite apart from the problem of civilian plutonium and related wastes, there are even larger quantities of military plutonium to be disposed of. Dismantling nuclear weapons increases the storage danger even as it decreases the risk of war. The only solution is an imperfect one: dispose of all the existing waste as best as possible. The real lesson is not to generate any more.

Trial by jury lies at the heart of justice

Public faith in Britain's justice system is low. But it could sink lower if more rights are lost, argues Michael Mansfield

MEASURES which undermine basic freedoms and rights in the UK are never single cataclysmic blows, but nearly always the result of long attrition waged by those with one purpose in mind — control and exercise of authority and power for their own ends.

The proposals by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, over the abolition of the right to jury trial are another, and serious, attack in a series now 10 to 15 years old. Previous attacks have come in many forms. The Roskill Commission claimed that juries were not qualified to deal with complicated financial questions, and required specialist tribunals. Lord Rawlinson, Sir Frederick Lawton and Lord Hailsham thought a property-owning qualification was necessary to preserve a better class of jury. Other members of the higher judiciary have considered that juries might be susceptible to nobbling and so heavy crime should be removed from their consideration.

Legislation has regularly restricted cases that can be heard by a jury. Each year another Criminal Justice Act knocks off a few more offences that may go for trial. The ultimate was the removal of juries in Northern Ireland for certain offences after the 1970s Diplock Commission.

The shared hidden agenda is not cost, nor efficiency, although those are the ideas meant for public consumption. What matters more is the overwhelming belief that ordinary people, given the chance, acquit too many of those on trial. This is most clear and poignant in those political cases where juries have returned conscientious decisions, reminding us of an earlier century when Quakers William Penn and William Meade were tried at the Old Bailey for conspiratorial gathering.

The jury was bullied and threatened, locked up without "meat, drink, fire and tobacco" and told by the Recorder "we shall have a verdict or you shall starve for it". When after three nights they acquitted William Penn, they were fined and imprisoned until the fines were paid. Four refused to pay and remained in prison.

It is ironic that, as public faith in the integrity and efficacy of the British criminal justice system is wavering, public participation in that system should be limited or removed. It is the most democratic form of justice in the world, a protection against the use of overbearing and arbitrary power by governments. Given Mr Howard's record, it is plain that he barely regards his actions as accountable. The more he is opposed, the better he likes it.

He would do well to bear in mind the words of Lord Devlin: "What makes juries worthwhile is that they see things differently from judges . . ." And E P Thompson once wrote that the English common law rests upon a bargain between the law and the people. "The jury box is where the people come into court . . . A jury is the place where the bargain is struck. A jury attends in judgment not only upon the accused, but also upon the justice and humanity of the law."

We should be encouraging trial by jury and building a system in which it plays the central part in all criminal justice. Instead, Mr Howard's proposal will affect about 70,000 cases a year — a third of all those heard at the crown courts: offences of dishonesty, drugs, offensive weapons and dangerous driving. All of these may involve significant issues of dispute and the risk of serious repercussions for the convicted. There is a significant difference between acquittal rates in the crown court (57 per cent) and those in magistrates courts (37 per cent). This is not to say that there is no chance of a fair trial in a magistrates court. There are lay magistrates representing the public, but a tribunal of three cannot have the same resources as a tribunal of 12 who do not have a regular job of trying cases.

It is also quite clear that the public would prefer, given the chance, to be tried by a jury. The 1993 Royal Commission on Criminal Justice first floated the idea of restricting the right to jury trial, as *quid pro quo* for its overall support for the maintenance of the right to silence. Mr Howard turned his back on that recommendation almost as soon as it was suggested. He has bided his time on jury proposals, because they are more controversial, waiting until he could capitalise on the lead-up to a general election, when the Labour party might not wish to be seen to be soft on law and order. Over the past two years, the Labour party has been lax in opposing public order, disclosure and bugging proposals until the lead was taken by others.

THE JURY debate cannot be a market-led argument — economics of scale or supermarket justice — because magistrates courts are already overloaded and understaffed. So many extra cases would require a bigger building programme, more magistrates, longer waiting times and increased costs.

It is disturbing that the Commission has extended its remit with little publicity. It recognises that the jury system is firmly believed to be "one of the cornerstones of our system of justice". It also observes that it received no evidence which could lead it to agree that an alternative method of arriving at a verdict in criminal trials would significantly lessen risks of a mistake. It was barred by the Contempt of Court Act from researching jurors' reasons for a verdict. It recommended such research should be made possible by future legislation, so that in future there would be an age limit and a literacy requirement for jurors, and the disqualification rules would be amended. If all these things come about, we would no doubt return to Lord Hailsham's preferred élitism. Yet another attack on democracy.

Michael Mansfield is a leading QC based in London who was involved in the Bridgewater Three and the Birmingham Six cases

Jamaica's passionate populist


Manley: advocate for the Third World PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEASER

Michael Manley

MICHAEL MANLEY, who has died aged 72, became the best known and most effective Commonwealth Caribbean statesman of the latter half of the 20th century. Twice Jamaica's prime minister, he was an advocate for the Third World, a journalist, trade unionist, author, scholar and arts patron. In the 1970s his first, controversial administration was marked by putting into practice the principles of democratic socialism.

Manley's background was one of privilege. He was born in Kingston, the second son of Norman Manley, premier of Jamaica from 1955-62 and founder of the People's National Party, and his sculptor wife, Edna, founder of Jamaica's modern art movement. Legend has it that his mother observed that Michael did not start talking until he was two. After that she could not silence him.

He was educated at Jamaica College and later at the London School of Economics (1945-49), after wartime service in the Royal Canadian Air Force. If he owed to his nation-building father his love of sports and his commitment to disinterested public service, he inherited from both parents his devotion to the arts and the conviction that national development must be linked to culture and the people's collective creativity.

While at the LSE, he became a member of the West Indian Students Union executive and co-founded the Caribbean Labour Congress of London. This campaigned for Jamaican independence and supported West Indian labour movements, progressive West Indian parties and a federation of the then British West Indies.

He returned to Jamaica in 1951 to work as a journalist. He was elected to the leadership of the National Workers' Union, one of the two trade unions that were supports for the main political parties. He launched an illustrious career as a union negotiator and the first president of the Caribbean Mine and Metal Workers Federation. In 1952 he became a member of the PNP executive.

His persuasive gifts at the bargaining table, coupled with his mesmerising oratory on the podium, further prepared him for the PNP presidency. In 1969 he succeeded his father, and in 1972 the PNP was elected to power and he became prime minister.

The 1970s are the most controversial period of Jamaican post-independence politics. Manley won worldwide fame and recognition from the non-aligned movement, the Group of 77 and Socialist International while facing a stiff rightwing opposition at home.

He was accused of mismanagement, pro-Castro leanings, squandering bauxite revenue on public spending, and with using an inflammatory leftwing rhetoric that scared away foreign investment. His vociferous critics said he had plunged the country into enormous debt through battles with, and later dependency upon, the International Monetary Fund, and presided over unrelieved negative growth.

His defenders insist on the rightness of his vision in seeking a third path, independent of Washington and Moscow. They note the huge strides he made in social justice and educational opportunity, enlisting the population as creative participants in development. Legislation addressed workers' rights, paid maternity leave, compulsory severance pay, worker co-ownership and child protection by abolishing the status of "bastard", which demeaned nearly 70 per cent of the Jamaican population born out of wedlock.

In 1980 he lost by a landslide to Edward Seaga's Jamaica Labour Party. So in the following decade he re-examined the PNP's economic strategy, accepting a larger role for the market after 1989 when his party was massively re-elected.

It was Manley's deep regret that the two-party system nurtured by his father was transformed into guerrilla warfare by persons who preferred to win power by the bullet rather than the ballot. The introduction of violence into electoral politics paved the way for drug-related violence and a debilitating gang warfare in Jamaica's ghettos.

His service to Jamaica's working class, through trade unionism and the building of a sophisticated industrial relations system, and his advocacy of self-reliance and participatory democracy is not likely to be lost.

Rex Nettleford

Michael Norman Manley, politician, born December 10, 1924; died March 6, 1997

Long cold war in a hot climate

Cheddi Jagan

Jagan: idealistic Marxist

THE DEATH of the President of Guyana, Cheddi Jagan at the age of 78, has brought to an end a political career stretching from the early, optimistic days of post-1945 anti-colonialism to the grim days of market-driven economic restructuring. It was his misfortune to lead Guyana in constrained circumstances in both periods.

Sugar plantation companies, which dominated the political, social and economic life of the colony, had drawn their labour force mainly from British India. Jagan's parents were among them.

Intelligence and hard work marked him out as an able student. His father wanted him to study law, but the expense of studying in England put this beyond his reach. Economic realities suggested Howard University, Washington DC, and dentistry. The six years he spent in the United States transformed him from someone with a romantic view of politics into a Marxist. He returned to British Guiana in 1943.

The absence of political parties and a restricted franchise meant that there was limited opposition to government policies much influenced by the British sugar and Canadian bauxite companies. Jagan's experiences confirmed his belief that major changes were necessary, and in 1950 led to the formation of the People's Progressive Party (PPP).

The legacy of slavery and indentured immigration had created a population divided between those of African and Asian descent. The PPP tried to unite these two groups within a radical anti-colonialist party and, in an attempt to foster unity, asked Forbes Burnham, an Afro-Guyanese lawyer recently returned from England, to become chairman with Jagan as leader. In the first elections under adult suffrage in 1953, the PPP, with a manifesto appealing to a broad base of Guyanese society, won easily.

Jagan's first term in office lasted only 133 days, ending with the suspension of the constitution in October and the arrival of British troops. A reformist programme, coupled with Marxist rhetoric, had proved too much for the British government to bear.

Burnham split the PPP in 1955, and in 1957 founded the People's National Congress party. He was helped by the British, who supported what they believed were his more moderate politics.

Meanwhile Jagan's PPP won both the 1957 and 1961 elections and embarked on welfare programmes in health, education and housing. However, ethnic divisions increased as the PPP and PNC became more overtly ethnic parties. By 1961 the PPP had been identified as the communist party by the West. After the Cuban revolution, the US became alarmed by Jagan and his party.

From early 1962 to mid-1964 strikes, riots and murderous political and ethnic conflict set Guyanese against Guyanese, postponing independence. British troops returned once more. Then in 1963 at a constitutional conference in London, Jagan committed his great political error. He agreed to the introduction of proportional representation for the 1964 elections. Burnham's PNC won the election and remained in power until 1992.

Exactly 39 years after he had been removed from office, Cheddi Jagan was sworn in as President of Guyana on October 9, 1992. He returned to office in a country demoralised by years of misgovernment, its population depleted by massive emigration, a huge international debt and a people whose survival had depended upon disregarding the government.

Despite the adulation in which he was held he remained the most approachable and modest of politicians. Among his endearing characteristics were his openness and his willingness to believe the best of nearly anyone. His Marxism was peculiarly idealist in both the popular and philosophical senses: he filled his speeches with information and failed to understand why people were not won over by arguments so clearly logical and based on evidence.

Peter D Fraser

Cheddi Jagan, politician, born March 22, 1918; died March 6, 1997

Music piracy heads towards record levels

Stuart Millar

THE European recording industry has launched a frontal assault on the large-scale illegal production of pirate compact discs in eastern Europe, which is costing companies and their artists billions of dollars in lost revenue every year.

Industry representatives have called on the European Commission to force the Bulgarian authorities to close five CD plants which are producing so many pirate copies from the biggest-selling acts that the legitimate music markets have been destabilised.

They say the Bulgarian government is fully aware of the activities of these plants, and may even be actively involved. Two of the plants are sited on state-owned land and come under the auspices of the ministry of culture.

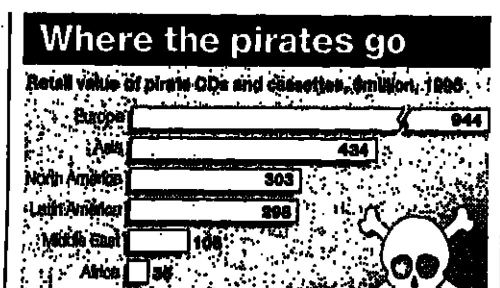
Experts estimate the economic damage to the European recording industry to be in excess of $150 million and are demanding that Bulgaria be denied entry into the European Union until the plants are closed.

Nicholas Garnett, director-general of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), said: "The sheer size of Bulgaria's illegal CD industry, which is quite disproportionate to the size of the country, has created one of the most serious international piracy problems for the recording industry."

Despite the Bulgarian government's claims to be tackling the problem, the use of the latest tracking technology, called the Source Identification Code, reveals that virtually all Bulgaria's CD production is illegal, with at least 12 million fakes a year swamping Europe's $24 billion record market, the largest in the world.

About 10,000 of the discs were recently intercepted at Dover, but the bulk of the output is sent to the Netherlands before being distributed across the Continent. The most recent seizures were made in Finland and Greece, while a further 1 million CDs a month are believed to flow into Russia from Bulgaria.

Where the pirates go



... and where they come from

1 China: By far the world's largest producer of pirate CDs producing an estimated 150 million a year

2 Bulgaria: Emerging as Europe's China, with almost 100 per cent of the 12 million discs produced in five plants considered illegal

3 Israel: Area of increasing concern, producing about 10 million pirate CDs, most of which are bootleg live recordings for the Japanese market

4 Czech Republic: Produces at least 5 million pirate CDs a year, mainly illegal compilations for the Dutch and German markets

Source: IFPI

"It's clear the government is turning a blind eye and not enforcing the regulations because it would be simple to stop at least some of this production," said Frances Moore, IFPI's European affairs director. "We know which plants are involved, we could give them the names and addresses."

The enormous scale of the Bulgarian operation illustrates the vast profits that can be made from pirate CDs. Last week it emerged that Oxfordshire trading standards officers have uncovered Britain's largest cache of fake discs, seizing 135,000 CDs with a value of $2.8 million.

The advent of digital technology and the low-cost distribution opportunities offered by the Internet have led to a dramatic rise in global profits from piracy, from $1.4 billion in 1991 to $2.14 billion in 1995, the last year for which figures are available. The industry says seizures indicate that the pirates' market has increased further.

China is historically the worst offender, with hundreds of clandestine plants, many of which are controlled by the military and regional officials. The Czech Republic and Israel are also home to multi-million dollar pirating industries.

The industry is dominated by organised criminal gangs attempting to launder money or raise large sums of cash quickly. The discs are usually transported by lorry on long spindles carrying thousands of unboxed discs, before being packaged on arrival in the country where they will be sold. Pirate CD shipments have been discovered alongside drugs, armaments and counterfeit cash at European borders.

In the past, the market was hindered by poor quality, but pirate CD plants now use the latest pressing technology to manufacture near-perfect fakes. The largest Bulgarian plant, Dzu-Dmon at Stara Zagora, uses equipment adapted from when it was a military computer research centre during the Soviet era.

"The quality of these recordings is high, thanks to digital technology, but consumers should be concerned because piracy on this scale could threaten future output of their favourite artistes," said Ms Moore. "Buyers of the illicit CDs are more likely to notice flaws in the packaging than the musical reproduction."

Rupert Perry, chief executive of EMI Europe, said: "People don't realise that by saving a few pounds buying a CD by their favourite artist they are jeopardising the future of that artist because there will be no money for reinvestment. This is theft, albeit on a massive scale."

In Brief

THE vast majority of European Union countries have already passed the inflation test to qualify for economic and monetary union, according to a new inflation measurement introduced by the European Commission.

DIETER Bock ended his controversial five-year association with Lonhro, resigning as a non-executive director to head the European arm of Trizec-Hahn, North America's second biggest real estate company.

KYRIACOS Papouis, the trader at the centre of the $80 million NatWest Markets scandal, has resigned from his job as a dealer with the US securities firm Bear Stearns.

THE car parts group GKN is making a $429 million provision after a US court ordered it to pay $591 million for defrauding franchisees of its American exhaust offshoot.

STAFF in John Lewis department stores and Waitrose supermarkets were celebrating an extra 10 weeks' pay as the employee-owned UK retail group announced a $130 million bonus after a record year.

BRITISH Airways confirmed that it is one of 19 airlines interested in buying the first $190 million superjumbo jet, the A3XX, which the European planemaking consortium, Airbus Industrie, is planning to launch next year.

EMPLOYEES at Pearson were offered a 30-day amnesty to report control failures in the media group's global empire, in an attempt to stamp out any more "black holes", such as the $159 million loss unearthed at its Penguin subsidiary last month.

GLAXO Wellcome could lose $1.2 billion worth of sales in just 12 months as its Zantac ulcer treatment medicine feels the full effect of cheaper generic competition in its key US market.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates March 10	Sterling rates March 3
Australia	2.0318-2.0340	2.0608-2.0634
Austria	19.19-19.21	19.29-19.31
Belgium	56.24-56.31	56.53-56.63
Canada	2.1950-2.1968	2.2137-2.2158
Denmark	10.40-10.40	10.46-10.47
France	9.19-9.20	9.25-9.26
Germany	2.7272-2.7293	2.7411-2.7439
Hong Kong	12.39-12.40	12.53-12.54
Ireland	1.0276-1.0294	1.0292-1.0307
Italy	2,710-2,713	2,743-2,745
Japan	194.80-195.01	195.58-195.78
Netherlands	3.0701-3.0722	3.0827-3.0858
New Zealand	2.2784-2.2810	2.3102-2.3133
Norway	10.93-10.94	11.06-11.07
Portugal	273.64-273.92	276.38-276.71
Spain	231.22-231.46	232.55-232.78
Sweden	12.17-12.19	12.27-12.29
Switzerland	2.3571-2.3597	2.3883-2.3914
USA	1.6015-1.6022	1.6190-1.6200
ECU	1.4032-1.4051	1.4124-1.4144

FTSE100 Share index up 190.8 at 4487.4, FTSE 250 index up 74.7 at 4729.2. Gold down $12.35 at $350.00.

Pension plan with holes in it

The Tory blueprint for pensions would reduce expected earnings, argues **Tony Lynes**

THE plan by the Social Security Secretary, Peter Lilley, to abolish state pensions may not win the election for the Conservatives — but if it does, the outlook for future pensioners will be dire.

The abolition of the basic pension is not as big a change as it looks. The existing policy of linking it to prices rather than earnings means that it is set to fall from about 16 per cent of average earnings to about 9 per cent by 2040, when those affected by the new proposals would start drawing their pensions.

The Lilley plan offers them a rebate of £9 a week to invest, but assumes that for very large numbers the resulting personal pension will be even smaller than the state basic (the cost of topping it up to the level of the basic is put by Mr Lilley at £10 billion a year).

The abolition of the state earnings-related pension (Serps) has been on the Tory agenda since the mid-eighties but never aroused much enthusiasm, even among private-pension purveyors, who saw little joy in having to provide for millions of low-paid and mobile employees. The disastrous mis-selling of personal pensions since 1988 ought to have confirmed their fears. Yet Mr Lilley now proposes to replace Serps with another massive extension of personal pensions.

He claims that the proposed 5 per cent contribution rebate to compensate for the loss of Serps would give a total private pension of £175 a week for the average earner "in today's money" — a crucial qualification. By 2040, assuming real-earnings growth of 1.5 per cent a year, male average earnings will be more than £750 a week, and a pension of £175 will be only 23 per cent of earnings (female average earnings are hardly relevant, since most women will have gaps in their earning record, as well as lower earnings, and won't get anything like £175).

No other country in Europe would consider that to be an adequate pension. Even in Britain, a man on average earnings who retired last year, solely dependent on the state scheme, got a pension of 36 per cent of pre-retirement earnings, more than half of it from Serps. So the Lilley plan represents a savage cut in the living standards of pensioners relative to the working population.

The size of the pension, however, is not the whole story. Equally important is the loss of security resulting from the switch from state to private pensions. In particular, Serps has enormous, though seldom recognised, advantages over its private competitors. For a start, Serps provides a pension of a predictable proportion of earnings. Most new private schemes don't, being based on "money purchase": the size of the pension depends on investment returns which not only fluctuate over time but vary widely from one scheme to another. The best occupational schemes do define the pension in advance, but usually as a percentage of pre-retirement earnings — a bad deal for manual workers who often earn more when they are young. Serps pensions are much fairer, based on whole-life earnings, not just the last year or two before retirement.

Serps also offers protection for unavoidable gaps in earnings, allowing people (mainly women) with broken careers, due to family responsibilities or sickness, to earn a full pension. And, uniquely, Serps allows people to change jobs or move in and out of the scheme any number of times without any loss of pension rights.

No other British pension scheme offers this combination of advantages. The case against it rests entirely on the argument that Britain cannot afford it. The fact is that decent pensions are costly. Funding does not reduce the cost — it only shifts it over time.

The Lilley proposals will be expensive in the medium term. As far ahead as 2040, those of working age will bear the double burden of paying for the pay-as-you-go state pensions of those already retired as well as contributing to privately funded schemes for their own retirement.

In the long run, it is true, public expenditure will be reduced as state pensions are phased out; but the total pension bill will fall only if the value of pensions also falls — as it will for many people in Britain, if Mr Lilley gets his way.

Tony Lynes is the author of Our Pensions: A Policy For A Labour Government (Eunomia Publications, 92 Grove Park, London SE5 8LE, £5)

How the scheme will work

THE Basic Pension Plus scheme, announced by the Government, will replace the present pay-as-you-go system, whereby those currently in work pay for the pensions of those in retirement, with a funded private scheme.

Under it, all those in their early 20s or younger will be forced to have a personal pension fund in addition to any private or occupational scheme they may be in. They will each get a £9-a-week rebate from their National Insurance (NI) contributions to put into their new personal fund.

In addition, they will be given a second rebate, of 5 per cent of their earnings liable to NI contributions, if they would have been eligible for the present state earnings-related pension. This will replace Serps, which will be abolished, and will be used to finance a new earnings-related pension.

The aim is to ensure all those in the new system will, at state retirement age, get a pension at least as good as they would have got from the current system.

The new generation will lose the tax reliefs on private pension contributions, enjoyed by their predecessors, but will pay no tax on their final pension income.

Iranians blame mullahs for economic woes

Mouna Naïm in Tehran

IN THE run-up to the Iranian New Year, which coincides with the beginning of spring on March 21, thousands of Iranians have been flocking to the shops. It is a time when families traditionally buy new clothes, organise lavish feasts and exchange gifts.

This year, it is proving cripplingly expensive for the average Iranian. Even the official newspaper, the Tehran Times, when reporting on the feelings of the population ahead of the presidential elections due to be held in June, had to admit that not all was well.

An education ministry official, Mohamed Tahuni, complained about the high cost of living: "My monthly salary is 250,000 rials [$120]. I pay rent of 200,000 rials a month, so there's only 50,000 rials left to meet the needs of my family."

With inflation running at about 25 per cent, buying power has fallen considerably. Most people, from teachers — whose monthly salaries are 400,000-500,000 rials — to soldiers, are forced to moonlight in order to top up their incomes. The government has no choice but to go on subsidising basic foodstuffs, since serious social upheaval could result from their being sold at their true price.

Workers at an oil refinery in south Tehran held a demonstration in front of the oil ministry last month. They called for pay rises, a labour agreement and housing loans. Police quickly arrived and arrested the demonstrators. A few months ago a more violent demonstration took place in Islamshah, a south Tehran district.

Complaining may be second nature to most Iranians — on their own admission. But they do now seem to have serious cause for disgruntlement. Since they are prevented from expressing their views in the street, Iranians complain in private.

Both the affluent and the far larger battalions of the underprivileged blame the Islamist regime for their problems. Their harshest criticism is aimed at the mullahs, whom they suspect of lining their own pockets.

Yadollah, a low-ranking civil servant, points to an emaciated young mullah walking along a Tehran street and says: "That one has just come out of the 'factory' in Qom [a holy city 150km south of Tehran]. He hasn't got any kilometres on the clock yet. Just wait and see what he looks like a few years from now." In Iran, plumpness and self-confidence are regarded as signs of wealth.

Assessing the true state of the economy is more complex. According to one analyst, the situation is not as bad as people think. The basic indicators have improved appreciably, as have official economic statistics, even on the admission of the International Monetary Fund.

The government, which got deeply into debt when it went on an import spree in 1992-93, has restructured its foreign debt and shown itself scrupulously punctual in honouring its commitments. It has been greatly helped by buoyant oil prices.

But it also became necessary to slash imports. This had an adverse effect on prices and production, even though substantial stocks had been built up. The central bank was given the necessary powers to set the situation right.

In some cases, the rules were stretched a little — as when it seemed politic, for example, to satisfy the demands of the *bazaaris*, businessmen who have historically been one of the pillars of the economy and the main allies of the mullahs.

They were recently authorised — following a "binding opinion" by parliament and against the will of the central bank and the government — to keep all their foreign currency revenues abroad on condition they used them to import raw materials needed by the carpet industry.

The industry provides a living for almost 9 million people, from the humblest weavers to the dealers at the top. The government had earlier forced dealers to repatriate all their foreign currency because it feared an outflow of capital.

But the crisis of the past few years has also been beneficial. It has encouraged the government to develop the industrial sector, a policy contrary to ancestral traditions, which are fundamentally bazaari.

"The policy also flatters the Iranians' pride and prickly nationalism," says a foreign diplomat. Iran, now self-sufficient in steel, has just obtained a $561 million loan, underwritten by the Italian government, from a consortium of European and Japanese banks to finance various steel projects.

It is also developing its petrochemical and aluminium industries, and hopes to do the same for its mechanical and electromechanical engineering sectors, and thus halt imports in these areas.

What Iran still lacks is a proper manufacturing industry. This is the result of insufficient domestic investment, usually ascribed to the "bazaari mentality" and a lack of appropriate legislation.

But the real problem facing Iran is the huge question mark that hangs over its future: because of the diversity of the factions that make up the present regime in Tehran, it is impossible to predict who will govern the country in the future and what their economic and financial policies will be.

(March 6)

Villagers in Shiran, in northwestern Iran, carry the body of one of the victims of last week's earthquake, in which thousands are thought to have died. The tragedy will only reinforce Iranians' perceptions that they are living through troubled times PHOTOGRAPH: MOHAMMAD SAYYAD

France upsets its Belgian neighbours

COMMENT
Luc Rosenzweig

AT LEAST the method used was swift and effective — a classic application of the "just-in-time" management credo espoused by today's globalised business community. On the morning of February 27 Michel de Virville, company secretary of the Renault group, boarded a high-speed train in Paris. A little more than two hours later he announced at a press conference in Brussels that Renault's assembly plant at Vilvoorde, near the Belgian capital, was going to close on June 30 with the loss of 3,100 jobs.

Virville fielded a few questions from journalists, then looked at his watch and asked: "When's the next train to Paris?" He departed shortly afterwards, leaving Belgium numb with indignation and anger.

The Belgian prime minister, Jean-Luc Dehaene, who lives in Vilvoorde, where his wife sits on the local council, had been informed of Renault's decision only the previous evening.

The Flemish regional government, which must pick up the pieces after what can only be described as an economic disaster for the Dutch-speaking part of Brabant province, had been kept entirely in the dark. It still thought Renault intended to expand its operations in Flanders, since it had recently held talks on the subject with the car manufacturer.

The Renault affair comes in the wake of other disputes that have poisoned Franco-Belgian relations over the past three years. The first row blew up in the summer of 1994, when Didier Pineau-Valencienne, chairman of the French industrial giant Schneider, was charged with having seriously harmed the interests of Belgian minority shareholders when companies controlled by his group merged. He was held on remand for 19 days.

The French were unhappy that an independent judiciary should treat one of their most brilliant captains of industry like some common swindler, and told the Belgians so in no uncertain terms.

Then came the Dassault affair. Suspected of having paid bribes to Belgian political parties in 1989 in return for a guarantee that Dassault Aviation would secure a contract to modernise the country's air force, Serge Dassault was summoned more than once to appear before Belgian magistrates. He refused. Eventually, last May, they issued an international warrant for his arrest.

Questioned a month later in Paris by French magistrates acting on behalf of the Belgian authorities, Dassault was aided by friends in the upper echelons of the French administration, who took steps to ensure that documents seized at the headquarters of various subsidiaries of the aircraft manufacturing group did not leave the justice ministry until December, thus delaying the Belgian magistrates' investigations.

It was only when the Belgian justice minister put pressure on his French counterpart that the relevant dossier found its way to Brussels — but even then it was incomplete. A number of documents detailing the route taken by Dassault's undercover payments never left the French justice ministry. Dehaene said last month that he was "disappointed" by France's attitude.

Franco-Belgian relations, then, are going through a bumpy patch. This has only strengthened Belgian prejudices about the arrogance of the French, who are seen as self-important and condescending towards those "little Belgians".

But the picture is not as black as it seems. There have been several successful and promising examples of Franco-Belgian co-operation. These include the reorganisation of the Suez-Générale de Belgique group, the merger of two banks, Crédit Local de France and Crédit Communal de Belgique, and a successful bid by Jean Gandois, head of the French employers' federation, to rescue the steel company Cockerill-Sambre, which was controlled by the French-speaking Walloon region.

However, Belgium remains a country deep in crisis. French diplomats and business people in the country, perhaps because they tend to spend most of their time with people who strongly believe in the survival of Belgium as a nation state, have not grasped the full depth of the crisis.

The country is being torn apart by Flemish leaders, who want to move on from the federal structure adopted in 1993 — which gave administrative autonomy to Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels — to a form of confederalism that would turn the federal state into an empty shell.

The Walloons and members of the French-speaking community in Brussels are doing their best to come up with a solution. A majority of French-speaking political leaders and intellectuals do not believe in the idea of being "returned to France", though it is gaining ground.

They are looking increasingly to the French because they realise that, given the economic environment in their regions, a Belgium restricted to Wallonia and Brussels would find it very hard to hold its own within the European Union.

The French authorities, clinging to the illusion of an eternal and unitary Belgium, have refused to heed the signals they regularly receive from Brussels and Wallonia. They have turned down a request from the government of Belgium's French Community that they should together reach an accord along the lines of the agreement between the Flemish Community and the Dutch authorities regarding the management of their joint linguistic and cultural heritage.

French-speaking Belgians get the impression they can expect little official support from Paris in their struggle against the "linguistic cleansing" being carried out by the Flemish. This is particularly true of certain districts on the outskirts of Brussels, whose mainly French-speaking inhabitants feel harassed by attempts on the part of the authorities to "Dutchify" the everyday life of the community.

Four academics at Louvain's Catholic University recently issued a manifesto called Choosing The Future, in which they appeal to Walloons and the inhabitants of Brussels to forget their differences and come up with a riposte to Flemish separatism.

One of the authors, Bernard Remiche, says: "People used to talk of the 'eastern question', which resulted in chaos and confrontation in the Balkans. Today there is a 'western question' — and it is Belgium." It would be a pity if France were to persist in turning a deaf ear to appeals from its "near abroad".

(March 4)

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 16 1997

Peru's rebel leader with a score to settle

Nicole Bonnet and
Georges Marion

NO ONE could claim Nestor Cerpa Cartolini has been untrue to his friends, his convictions or his memories. The man who, in the name of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), still holds 72 hostages at the Japanese embassy in the Peruvian capital, Lima, has been replaying a similar situation that he experienced 18 years earlier.

In late 1978, at a time when the MRTA did not yet exist, Cerpa was a trade union leader at Cromotex, a textile factory in one of Lima's industrial suburbs. A sit-in by workers resulted in a two-month stand-off with police, who eventually used armoured vehicles to storm the factory. Six workers died, including a close friend of Cerpa's, the trade unionist Hermigidio Huertas.

Only a few minutes after entering the Japanese embassy on December 17, Cerpa brandished a book about the sit-in at the Cromotex factory and said he had named his commando unit after Huertas. "At the time of Cromotex, we didn't have any weapons," he added. "This time we do. And we also have hostages."

The message was clear: Cerpa was determined to erase the memory of the factory occupation that cost six of his comrades' lives. According to a friend who no longer lives in Peru, Cerpa "must somehow have felt guilty when their action went terribly wrong".

When Cerpa's mother says that her son "went into the embassy on behalf of his friends", she understands "friends" to be both the victims of the Cromotex affair and the 400 prisoners whose release he has called for.

She takes out the few photos she has kept of her son and spreads them on the table. They show a chubby, smiling baby — a contrast with the thick-set man who nowadays covers the lower part of his face with a white-and-red MRTA scarf. A recent snap taken when he was on the run shows a tourist-like Cerpa by the seaside with Nancy Gilvonio, the mother of his two small children.

Some regard Cerpa as a bloodthirsty terrorist, others as an idealist guerrilla. Hostages released during the first few days of the embassy siege described him as "dignified", "modest" and "calm". One woman found "something very endearing about him" and was struck by his "magnetic eyes, intelligent and quick mind, and courtesy — I wouldn't exactly say he was Che Guevara, but there's something of Che about him".

For Ricardo Letts, a former member of parliament who knew Cerpa years ago, his most striking characteristic is his stubbornness: "He'll never give in. He may prefer to secure a place in the history books by sacrificing himself."

Nestor Cerpa was born on August 14, 1953, in Lima. His father was a taxi driver and then a chauffeur at the transport ministry, where he was a union representative. His widow describes him as "leftwing, but no revolutionary". The family owned a house and a car, and Nestor went to a private school. A gifted child, he was expected to go to university like his elder sister. But in 1970, before he could do so, his father died.

Nestor suddenly found himself head of the family. He got a job at Cromotex, where employees worked in three shifts round the clock. He soon became a union representative, probably because, as his mother claims, he was "reliable, responsible, warm and close to people".

When he organised the Cromotex sit-in in late 1978, Peru was ruled with an iron fist by General Francisco Morales Bermudez, who had seized power three years earlier. A wave of strikes forced the president to agree to the convening of a constituent assembly, in which the left was well represented.

A movement of solidarity began to gather behind the Cromotex workers' struggle. But at 4am on February 4, 1979, police swept into the factory and started shooting. "The boss had connections within the government," says Cerpa's mother. As well as the six workers who died, a police lieutenant was killed. Charged with being responsible for his death, Cerpa was held for eight months before being released for lack of evidence.

Because of his notoriety Cerpa found it hard to find a job. After drifting for a year, he was taken on by a small company set up by former Cromotex strikers. But his respite was short-lived: one day the police picked him up as he left work. He spent a further six months in jail, apparently on no specific charge. When he came out, he went underground. Within the space of a few years, the union activist had turned into a revolutionary fighter like Huertas, who had belonged to a group that later became one of the components of the MRTA.



Front man . . . An undated file photo shows Nestor Cerpa, leader of the Tupac Amaru rebels who are holding hostages in Lima

The MRTA first drew attention to itself in 1984 with an act of "economic retrieval" (a bank hold-up), in the course of which it suffered its first casualty.

THE MOVEMENT had been founded by Victor Polay Campos. Unlike Cerpa, Polay — now serving a life sentence — was an intellectual who started out as a social democrat. He was decisively influenced by the five years (1972-77) he spent studying sociology at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he met revolutionaries from all over Latin America and became convinced, like many Latin American intellectuals of his generation, that things could be changed only by armed struggle.

In the seething social and political climate of Peru at the time, all the parties of the left were hotly debating the issue of whether to take up arms or not. The Maoist Shining Path guerrillas were the first to do so, at the beginning of the eighties. The MRTA soon followed suit, as it did not want to allow its rival a monopoly of revolutionary violence.

The Shining Path, spawned by the Sino-Soviet split of the sixties, was founded by the guru-like Abimael Guzman, who saw himself as an heir to Lenin, Stalin and Mao rolled into one. Although its political ideology was rather crude, the Shining Path managed to muster some 10,000 fighters in destitute rural areas. It targeted not only troops and government officials, but rival leftwing activists who were guilty, in its eyes, of spreading illusions.

The MRTA, on the other hand, adopted a more internationalist revolutionary line, taking the Cuban revolution as its model. The two movements were soon competing for territory, media attention and the complicity of drug traffickers.

No one knows exactly when Cerpa joined the MRTA, and his mother cannot or will not say. "He left home soon after his last spell in jail, and I didn't see him again until the end of 1987," she says. That was the year she took refuge in France on the orders of the organisation. She was joined there a few months later by Polay's wife and children.

Within a few years Cerpa, now known as Comrade Evaristo, had risen in the ranks. He visited Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. In Peru the MRTA carried out bank robberies, attacked luxury hotels and restaurants, occupied newspapers and news agencies so as to be able to issue its propaganda communiqués, and distributed food in shanty towns.

Businessmen were kidnapped and held until a ransom was paid. Some were murdered. In September 1985, the police put a price on Cerpa's head, claiming he was a leader of a Shining Path cell.

To prove the claim was false, Cerpa stormed the offices of the newspaper El Nacional and gave a brief press conference. A year later, he was one of a group that organised the taking of two towns in the department of San Martin.

Two thousand soldiers were sent into the region, where a state of emergency was announced. That did not stop the guerrilla movement gaining ground: between 1989 and 1992, the MRTA opened a second front around the town of Villa Rica, 350km east of Lima, while the region of San Martin was virtually under rebel control.

Polay's arrest in February 1989 did not seriously slow the MRTA's progress. Seventeen months later, Cerpa organised the digging of a 200-metre tunnel that enabled Polay and 43 of his comrades to make a spectacular escape from jail.

But in 1992 both Polay and the Shining Path's Guzman were arrested and given life sentences. The guerrilla struggle, which had seemed unstoppable, ran out of steam. The Peruvian population ended up losing patience with a "dirty war" that had brought 30,000 casualties, violent dissensions that were tearing the left apart, chronic shortages, widespread disruption and a soaring inflation rate, which peaked at 8,000 per cent in 1990.

A little-known politician, Alberto Fujimori, was elected president in 1990 and promised to set things right. The medicine he administered tamed both inflation and the guerrilla movement, which was being deserted by disenchanted fighters and hounded by government troops that had been given *carte blanche*.

In 1995, the remaining leaders of the MRTA, apart from Cerpa, were arrested just as a commando unit was about to storm the parliament building. Its aim, as in the present hostage-taking, was to obtain the release of hundreds of prisoners.

Cerpa, who escaped the police swoop, became the last leader of a movement whose membership had shrunk to a few dozen activists. Although he is now about to fire his last cartridge, he behaves as if he has all the time in the world and, above all, nothing to lose — all his friends are dead or in jail.

(February 25)

Court takes narrow view of sex harassment

Michèle Aulagnon

THE appeal court of Riom, in central France, takes a narrow view of what constitutes sexual molestation. In a ruling two weeks ago, it argued that "the definition of sexual molestation presupposes the intervention of a male or female sexual organ", and that "a person's buttock, thigh, arm, neck or hand cannot be classed as a sexual organ".

That nice anatomical distinction led the appeal court to slash a sentence that had been passed on the mayor of a small village in the Cantal *département*, Jean-Pierre Meynial, farmer and mayor of Salins (130 voters), had gone on trial for touching two women council employees in an "improper" way.

On June 9, 1995, two days before local elections were due to be held, he called on Nathalie Julien at her home, ostensibly because he wanted to look at her government-sponsored contract for a job as cook at the school canteen. News of his visit soon spread round the village.

Two and a half months later, Julien, who is married to a councillor elected on the mayor's list, told a council meeting that Meynial had suddenly kissed her arm, stroked her right thigh, clasped her in his arms and tried to kiss her again. The mayor responded by saying he had simply patted her on the bottom.

These revelations came as no surprise to Nadine Laporte, Julien's predecessor as school cook. She said she had been given the same treatment in 1992, when she was busy washing the canteen windows. The mayor had later dropped in on her several times again and stroked her "neck, thighs and buttocks".

The two women took the matter to court, complaining of sexual assault by a person in authority. On November 7, 1996, an Aurillac court ruled that "Jean-Pierre's Meynial's guilt was in no doubt, since it was established that he had taken advantage of the authority invested in him by the office of mayor". His conduct, said the court, had been sufficiently grave to constitute "the offence of sexual molestation involving coercion or surprise".

Meynial was given a two-month suspended prison sentence and ordered to pay damages of \$2,700 to the two victims. He was also stripped of his civic and civil rights for one year.

The Riom appeal court took a different view. Its magistrates ruled that it was a case not of "sexual molestation involving coercion or surprise", but of deliberate violence that had not brought about any total industrial disability. It therefore reduced his sentence to two fines of \$400 each.

The Socialist Party has protested against the court's restrictive interpretation of the law.

Laporte has appealed against the ruling, but Julien — who has since lost her job as school cook and whose husband has resigned from the village council — has preferred to let matters rest.

(March 4)

Le Monde
Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 16 1997

The Washington Post

Kisangani Holds Key to Zaire's Stability

Stephen Buckley
in Nairobi, Kenya

IF KISANGANI, Zaire's third-largest city, falls to rebels soon, as appears likely, its capture would be the equivalent of American insurgents taking New York or Chicago. Zaire's uprising, which has been going on for over four months probably would be over.

For Kisangani, an economic hub in a strategic location, is also the base of the government's two-month campaign to halt the onslaught of the rebels, who have corraled a 900-mile swath of territory since last October.

Some analysts fear that the conflict could split this already fractured country further, lead to years of political anarchy and create a massive refugee crisis for the nine countries on the former Belgian colony's borders.

The government has concentrated most of its few hundred mercenaries around Kisangani, sent military aircraft on bombing missions from the city and stockpiled hundreds of tons of ammunition at its airport.

"If the rebels take Kisangani, the morale of the Zairian army would be extremely low," said Andre Kapanga, chairman of the All North American Conference on Zaire, a body of Zairian intellectuals who live in the United States and Canada. "If the base of their counter offensive fails, where else would they resist the rebels?"

Kisangani, with an estimated 350,000 residents, holds a special place in the Zairian psyche. Explorer-journalist Henry Morton Stanley founded it in the late 1800s, and it was called Stanleyville until the early 1970s. The city is believed to be the setting for V.S. Naipaul's classic novel, A Bend In The River. Its location on the river and along a major railway line helped make Kisangani an economic beacon for decades. Its position at the middle of the continent also made it a center of commerce.

And nothing has made Kisangani more economically important than the diamond and gold mines surrounding it. That is one reason the government rushed to shore up the city shortly after the rebels took several key cities and towns within the first two months of the insurgency.

Armed response . . . troops patrol Zaire's capital Kinshasa, where support for anti-government rebels has prompted a ban on demonstrations PHOTOGRAPH. DAVID GUTTENFELDER

The rebels, who have said they aim to capture Kinshasa, the capital, and overthrow longtime dictator Mobutu Sese Seko, began rumbling toward Kisangani in December.

Since then, the insurgents, known as the Alliance of Democratic Forces for Liberation (Congo-Zaire), have eased their way to the city by overwhelming several key towns and withstanding numerous airstrikes. The city eagerly awaits them. In recent days, thousands of people have tried to flee, but they reportedly are scrambling to escape government soldiers, known for ransacking cities and ravaging residents.

Kisangani has long been a center of anti-government sentiment. Anti-Mobutu sentiment springs from the city's economic downfall. Once sprinkled with fine hotels, the city today is a symbol of the government neglect that has eviscerated the enormous country.

Thousands of tourists once flocked to Kisangani to challenge the rapids, take in the awesome forest and shop for items from Parisian dresses to American-made cars.

Today the city has one decent hotel. Its once-gorgeous houses are dilapidated and gray with grime.

"It used to be a jewel of a city," Kapanga said. "But now it's like the rest of Zaire. The people get no services. Everything is falling apart."

The rebels' taking of Kisangani could have huge repercussions in Kinshasa, 1,000 miles to the southwest. Some political analysts predict that a government defeat in Kisangani would ignite a political brawl among those hoping to fill Mobutu's shoes. The president, struggling with prostate cancer, is in Europe, where he has remained for most of this conflict.

"The regime would be completely destabilized," one senior diplomat said. "It's going to be chaos. People will be fighting each other to position themselves to take over."

Others predict the rebels would slow their pace after the fall of Kisangani and wait for the government to negotiate with the alliance. Kinshasa has embraced a U.N.-sponsored cease-fire plan but thus far has rejected direct talks with the rebels.

Lynne Duke in Goma, Zaire, adds: With his troops poised outside Kisangani, Zairian rebel leader Laurent Kabila said last weekend that he is open to negotiations with the crumbling government of Mobutu and that he accepts, in principle, a United Nations plan calling for a cease-fire and negotiations.

It appeared unlikely, however, that any talks would come soon enough to stop an assault on Kisangani, whose fall could be the turning point in the conflict. Kabila said rebel forces are about 28 miles from the city and continue to approach in several columns, as they have in other regional towns where they met limited opposition.

Kabila had previously demanded face-to-face talks with Mobutu, but he suggested last Saturday that he might be open to a meeting with someone other than the ailing president. The rebel leader said that among the issues that need to be discussed are the "modalities of relinquishing power" by the Mobutu regime.

Bomb Explodes on Beijing Bus

Steven Mufson in Beijing

A BOMB exploded on a public bus in a busy Beijing shopping area during rush hour on Friday evening last week, injuring about 30 people and shattering the calm that had reigned over the Chinese capital since the death of paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.

Reuter news agency quoted unnamed sources as saying that two people were killed in the attack, but the official Beijing Daily said there were no deaths.

Bus No. 22 was heading south on Xidan, one of Beijing's busiest shopping streets, and less than a mile west of Tiananmen Square. Eyewitnesses told reporters that the device blew out the rear windows and that the vehicle burst into flames as it came to a stop near a McDonald's restaurant north of Chang An Street.

The bombing was one of the most violent apparently random acts in the Chinese capital within memory, cutting to the heart of Chinese leaders' fears about maintaining stability. Police cordoned off the area and towed away the bus. Hours later there was little sign of the incident, other than shards of glass littering the street and uniformed and plain-clothed security police on patrol.

With no clear motive for the attack, and no claim of responsibility, police appeared to suspect a link with Muslim separatists who are trying to create an independent "East Turkestan" out of what is now China's far western Xinjiang Province.

Police suspicions of Muslim separatists were fueled by recent bombings in Xinjiang. On February 25, three bus bombs in the provincial capital, Urumqi, blew up within minutes of each other, killing nine people and wounding 74. The Urumqi bombings appeared to be timed to coincide with funeral rites in Beijing for Deng. A fourth bomb failed to explode. A pro-Beijing newspaper said that seven suspects were arrested.

On Monday last week, another bomb, unreported, was set off elsewhere in the province, a government source said.

The separatists are mostly Turkic-speaking people who dominate the sparsely populated region. China has long claimed the area to safeguard its northwest border and, more recently, has harbored hopes of discovering major oil fields there.

Maintaining equilibrium across this vast country will be crucial for President and Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin as he attempts to solidify his rule before this autumn's important party congress.

The legislature is also expected to take steps to deal with domestic conflict. While the Congress is set to abolish "counter-revolutionary crimes" from the criminal code, it will also toughen penalties for those who are seen to threaten public order through any form of protest, according to revisions unveiled last week.

Chinese Defense Minister Chi Haotian told the legislature that it should approve a national defense law that would make it easier for the military to respond to domestic turmoil, dissent and ethnic separatism. "National defense not only covers guarding against and resisting armed invasion from abroad, but also stopping domestic armed rebellions and armed riots aimed at splitting the fatherland," Chi said.

Germany Expels U.S. 'Spy'

William Drozdiak in Berlin

GERMANY has ordered an American diplomat to leave the country after accusing him of trying to recruit senior officials for espionage and steal secrets related to high technology projects, government officials said last weekend.

It was believed to be the first time that a United States diplomat has been expelled on spying charges from postwar Germany, according to a report by the weekly newsmagazine Der Spiegel, which released the information ahead of publication on Monday.

German officials confirmed the expulsion, but a spokeswoman for the U.S. Embassy in Berlin declined to comment. State Department officials in Washington also declined comment.

According to Der Spiegel's account, a CIA agent working under diplomatic cover tried to obtain classified information and suborn officials from Germany's Economics Ministry. An official who was approached reported the contacts to Germany's counter espionage agency, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, which demanded that the diplomat leave the country.

The newsweekly said the diplomat, whom it did not name, already had departed Germany, although it did not say when. To avoid any disruption in good working relations between the two allies, Der Spiegel said the case was handled discreetly by the intelligence hierarchies of both nations.

The latest spying controversy reflects a new era of intensifying economic competition between western allies now that the Soviet military threat has vanished. Two years ago, France expelled five Americans — four of them CIA officers operating as diplomats in the U.S. Embassy — after they were caught trying to bribe French officials for information about France's secret bargaining position in global trade talks.

Germany repeatedly has told the United States that the time has come for a dramatic reduction in the number of CIA officers operating here. During the Cold War, Germany was by far the largest American overseas base for military and other kinds of intelligence and American agents were allowed to gather information with virtual impunity.

The escalation of economic rivalries across the Atlantic in the post-Cold War era, however, has started to generate serious friction between friendly nations. Besides European irritation over CIA attempts to find new routes to ferreting out allied economic secrets, the FBI has been incensed by the increasing efforts of France, in particular, to steal information about highly classified industrial projects of U.S. corporations.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 16 1997

Netanyahu's Allies Begin to Desert Him

Barton Gellman in Jerusalem

PRIME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu, who emerged from January's Hebron agreement with aspirations as a consensus politician, is looking today like a man without allies, as embattled as any Israeli prime minister in memory.

Washington has displayed irritation with his government, the conflict with Palestinians is poised once again on the brink of violence, and his cabinet now is divided between antagonists of many years, such as Foreign Minister David Levy and Finance Minister Dan Meridor, and once-loyal lieutenants, such as Communications Minister Limor Livnat, with whom he is barely on speaking terms.

With multiple fractures in his governing coalition, Netanyahu's hold on power is the subject of increasing speculation in Israel. Some of the talk is wishful thinking by longtime opponents, and his history as successful underdog makes it foolish to write him off. Even so, according to party activists and foreign diplomats who watch him closely, Netanyahu has not been in as tough a spot before.

On the way back from Egypt last week, he confided to journalist Shimon Shiffer that "there are some moments of isolation in my job." That was before eight right-wing lawmakers threatened on Friday last week to abandon his parliamentary coalition, enough to bring down the government if they vote as they say they will.

It was before Uzi Landau, a senior Likud legislator and former key supporter, called him a liar, and before his Likud predecessor as premier, Yitzhak Shamir, demanded that he resign.

It was also before a tense telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, in which, according to accounts from both governments, he refused her requests to freeze plans for a new Jewish neighborhood in East Jerusalem and rescind police orders to close Palestinian political offices in the city's historically Arab neighborhoods.

Netanyahu's political assets include a public trustworthiness rating of 52 percent in a poll last week in the newspaper Haaretz, down from 64 percent in August but still respectable. He has also managed to juggle, at least until now, the most divisive issues of land for peace while commanding strong majorities for each decision among Israeli Jews. But Netanyahu now is alienated almost completely from Israel's political establishments, including those of his own party and political base.

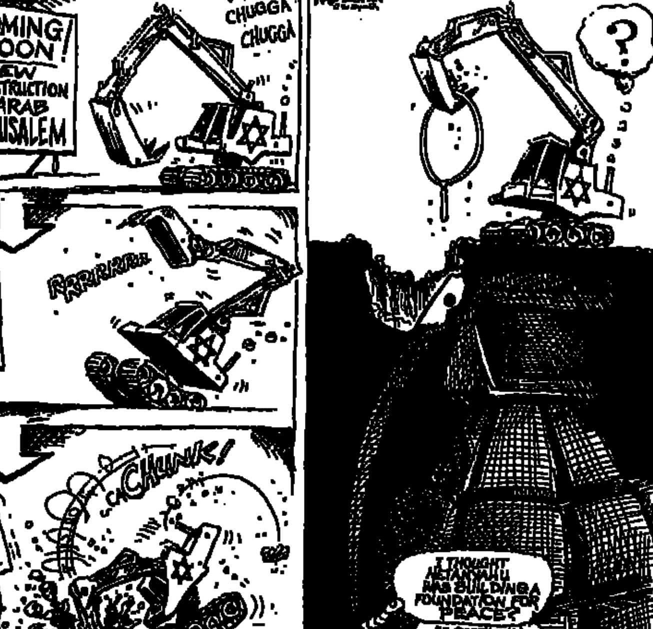
So far have Netanyahu's political fortunes declined that he invited in opposition leader Shimon Peres on Friday last week for an unscheduled, and briefly secret, meeting to talk about a "national unity" government in which the Labor Party would join forces with Netanyahu's Likud. Netanyahu has raised the idea before, according to one close aide, "as a ruse, a tactical maneuver to scare his coalition partners into line. I think this time he may actually mean it."

For the moment, even if he means it, the idea seems doomed. A police investigation into allegedly corrupt deals behind the appointment of a short-lived attorney general in January has left Netanyahu's government under an ethical cloud. Forming a unity coalition now, said Labor Party activist Yitzhak Herzog, would be "like joining a colony of lepers. There will not be a majority in Labor to join a government that seems on the verge of collapse."

There is no sign of evidence for the most spectacular of the allegations in the attorney general affair: that two politically powerful men facing felony charges — Shas party leader Aryeh Deri and Likud money man David Apel — tried to install their own candidate for attorney general, cut a deal with him to grant pardons or plea bargains in their cases, and threatened to hand Netanyahu a major political defeat if he did not appoint their man.

But even if police bring no charges, there have been enough untoward disclosures to do lasting damage. There is evidence, to begin with, that felony defendants Deri and Apel had advance knowledge and participation in the nomination of Roni Bar-On for the nation's senior law enforcement post. The justice minister, Tzahi Hanegbi, was shown in a leaked cabinet transcript to have misrepresented Bar-On's credentials and endorsements by senior legal figures.





And Netanyahu, after being interrogated under warning, hired a lawyer who spread word that the Bar-On nomination was Hanegbi's fault, not Netanyahu's. Hanegbi, once Netanyahu's closest political operative, spread counter-spin that the nomination was mainly his boss's idea.

Trade Minister Natan Sharansky, a former Soviet political prisoner, showed increasing signs of discomfort as the case pressed on. "As someone with considerable experience of interrogations, I know that when those under investigation start blaming each other that means the investigation is succeeding, and that doesn't smell good," he said.

Sharansky's party, Yisrael B'Aliyah (Movement for Israel and Immigration), controls seven seats in Netanyahu's governing coalition, enough to deprive him of a majority in the 120-seat parliament. The Third Way Party, led by Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani, controls four. Both are new parties with clean-government images, and although both are enjoying their first taste of power, they also have some incentive now to be the first to call for new elections because of the scandal.

"When people smell weakness in politics it very often invites attack and further erosion," said political scientist Yaron Ezrahi. "Right now there are a lot of elements who are interested in the demise of Netanyahu."

The noisiest at the moment is the hard-core ideological right, which felt betrayed by Netanyahu's agreement in January to abide by the Oslo peace accords between Israel and Palestinians and withdraw from most of Hebron. And again in the predawn hours on Friday last week when the cabinet voted to pull back from 9 percent more of territory on the West Bank.

"Bibi," said Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, using Netanyahu's nickname, "is a dangerous man for the state of Israel. I do not believe one word that leaves that man's mouth." Columnist Yoel Marcus, writing in Haaretz last week said, "Our history shows that whenever ministers began speaking publicly against their own government, it or its prime minister fell."

● The United States last week went against the tide of international opinion and vetoed a proposed Security Council resolution urging Israel to abandon plans to build housing that would draw thousands more Jews into East Jerusalem.

Asserting that the resolution could impede peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson cast the sole vote in the 15-nation council against the resolution put forward by West European governments.

Swiss Make Offer of Fund For Victims

William Drozdiak in Berlin

IN THE boldest response yet to accusations it profited from the Holocaust, Switzerland offered last week to create a large humanitarian fund that would draw on the country's vast gold reserves to aid victims of catastrophes, human-rights abuses and Nazi terror.

In a major address to parliament on his country's role as a financial crossroads during World War II, President Arnold Koller announced that the government had decided to establish the Swiss Foundation for Solidarity as a way to express the nation's gratitude for having escaped the ravages of two world wars.

Koller said the fund would donate up to $300 million a year to needy recipients at home and abroad from the profits of selling off up to $5 billion of gold reserves from the central bank. The fund will require the constitution to be amended, but Koller said it should be operating by the time Switzerland marks its 150th anniversary as a modern state next year.

He said beneficiaries would include "victims of poverty and catastrophes, of genocide and other serious human-rights abuses, and of course, also for those of the Holocaust and Shoah," referring to survivors of the Nazi campaign to exterminate Jews, Gypsies and homosexuals.

The dramatic gesture by the Swiss head of state was intended to repair the damage to Switzerland's reputation inflicted by revelations over the past two years that the nation shielded itself from a Nazi invasion and reaped a financial windfall during the war by effectively serving as the Third Reich's banking haven.

Besides taking gold looted from foreign treasuries by the Nazis, Switzerland turned back at its border nearly 30,000 Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution and thus condemned many of them to almost certain death when they were dispatched to concentration camps.

Swiss banks eagerly accepted artworks, jewelry and cash for safekeeping from European Jews, many of whom eventually perished.

Drug War: The Enemy Within

AMERICAN VIEW
Stephen S. Rosenfeld

REGARDING the jagged exchanges with Mexico and Colombia over their alleged role in drug trafficking, many Americans believe that it is worth any strain in our international relations to protect our population from a menace arguably more sinister than war. This is the current that inclines impatient legislators to undercut the essential cooperation with Mexico by reversing President Clinton's certification of that country as a reliable anti-drug partner.

Not only that. Many Americans are also prepared to overlook the sobering reality that our national drug problem may inflict even greater costs on some of the more vulnerable Latin societies — in wrecked lives, distorted economies and corrupted institutions — than it does on our own children, cities and civil prospects. At the end of the day, after all, we're still democratic and rich.

Finally, many Americans wonder whether we could pass a Latin test for reducing drug demand, if one were imposed, any better than they can pass our very real test for reducing supply. Even so, we conclude that a little hypocrisy is a small price to pay for doing something effective about drugs.

But to mess up our foreign policy, damage and punish our friends, come off as a hypocrite and then to cause these losses without cutting back all that much on the flow of drugs to American consumers: that seems to be where we are now. It is an intolerable place to be.

Supply and demand are the poles of a nagging and seemingly interminable debate over where to place the urgency of defense against the drug plague. It is, in its daily public aspect, a technical debate over means — what works? what can be done? But it is also a political and ideological debate over the responsibility for our drug problem. Some think we are being poisoned by foreigners and would first fight the suppliers: hence the dangerous rolling showdown with Mexico. Others think our drug problem arises from flaws and fissures in our own society, and they would go after demand.

This year's version of the drug debate, however, has seemed a bit different. From the White House come signs of readiness to supplement the traditional emphasis on reducing supply with a sharper edge of attack on demand, especially among the young.

Restricting drugs at their foreign sources, or interdiction, has long been the thrust of a counter-drug strategy employing military means, law enforcement and crop eradication and substitution. There are some statistical successes to report in drug seizures, convictions and the like. But the salient measures of price, potency and availability of cocaine and heroin on the street provide a more mixed picture. Official sources report cocaine production (along with consumption) is down but heroin is easily available. Nor does interdiction touch the plentiful and growing American sources of marijuana and other, synthetic, drugs that Americans use.

The main lines of an alternative, more demand-oriented strategy are currently on fresh display by an experts' panel organized by the Council on Foreign Relations and chaired by Mathea Falco, Carter State Department drug-policy chief. Its report was timed to release of the Clinton administration's own new drug control plan.

You do not have to embrace the whole Falco report to accept that more attention could profitably be paid to reducing demand through prevention, education, treatment and the sort of close-to-home law enforcement that seems to have the biggest payoff. Enforcement at the source has its continuing valuable police and foreign-policy uses, the report suggests, but law officers cannot comfortably cope with the ease with which growers plant new fields and traffickers open new transit routes.

Recent research, the report goes on, suggests that reducing demand is more cost-effective than trying to reduce foreign supplies: "Specifically, $34 million invested in treatment reduces cocaine use as much as an expenditure of $783 million for source-country programs or $366 million for interdiction, according to a 1994 Rand Corporation study."

In the drug-policy wars, of course, no good study goes unrebutted. All the same, I share the general sense that we are not doing well enough in reducing our drug problem. It also seems to me that President Clinton is of a mind to review old thinking. It is a good time to see a strong case being made for doing things differently.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 16 1997

East Timor Teeters on the Edge of More Bloodshed

Matthew Jardine

"HELLO, Mister. Where are you from?" I had just arrived at the tiny airport in Dili, capital of Indonesian-occupied East Timor. The man, clad in civilian clothes, didn't identify himself except to say he was from Java, Indonesia's principal island. His questions — and the respect he seemed to command from uniformed officials at the airport — led me to believe he was an intelligence agent. As the only obviously non-Indonesian or East Timorese on this daily flight from Bali a few months ago, I attracted his attention.

"Are you a journalist?" the man asked, examining my passport. "Where are you planning to stay?"

I mentioned a local hotel and told him I was a tourist, a common lie that journalists tell to avoid immediate expulsion from places such as East Timor. I wasn't surprised by the scrutiny: During my first trip to East Timor in 1992, I was frequently followed and questioned as I traveled around the tropical, mountainous territory, which makes up half of an uncommonly beautiful island at the eastern end of the Indonesian archipelago, 400 miles north of Australia.

But the beauty belies a harsh reality. In the more than 21 years since Indonesia invaded East Timor and annexed it, more than 200,000 people — about one-third of the country's pre-invasion population — have died as a result of the invasion, Indonesia's subsequent campaign of repression, the ensuing famine and East Timorese resistance to the ongoing occupation, according to Amnesty International.

East Timor was a backwater of the Portuguese colonial empire until April 1974, when the military dictatorship in Lisbon was overthrown. Two pro-independence political parties sprung up in East Timor; this development scared the Indonesian military, which feared that an independent East Timor could incite secessionist movements elsewhere in the ethnically diverse archipelago or serve as a platform for leftist subversion.

Indonesian intelligence agents began covertly interfering in East Timor's decolonization, helping to provoke a brief civil war between the two pro-independence parties. Amid the chaos, Portugal abandoned its rule of the island. Soon after, Indonesian troops attacked from West Timor (Indonesia has governed the island's western half since its own independence in 1949), culminating in a full-scale invasion on December 7, 1975. They met with fierce resistance from Falintil, the East Timorese guerrilla army. But the war turned in Indonesia's favor with the procurement of counterinsurgency aircraft from the Carter administration in Washington.

The Indonesian military was able to bomb and napalm the population into submission, almost destroying the resistance as well. An Australian parliamentary report later called it "indiscriminate killing on a scale unprecedented in post-World War II history."

Until 1989, East Timor was virtually closed to the outside world. Then the Indonesian government "opened" the territory to tourism and foreign investment, but continued to restrict visits by international human rights monitors and journalists.

As my taxi left the airport, I saw immediate evidence of change since my 1992 visit: On a wall near the airport entrance, someone had boldly spray-painted "Viva Bishop Belo," a tribute to Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, the head of East Timor's Catholic Church. Belo and Jose Ramos Horta were awarded the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize for their opposition to Indonesian oppression.

During my 1992 visit, most East Timorese seemed too afraid to make direct eye contact with me. This time, many people greeted me as I walked the streets in Dili, a picturesque city of 150,000. Some, particularly younger people, flashed a "V" sign for victory, a display of their nationalist sympathies.

East Timor remains a place where few dare to speak their minds in public

East Timorese with the means to own a parabolic antenna can now watch Portuguese state television (RTP) — which beams its signal into the territory over Indonesia's objections — and catch glimpses of pro-independence leaders in exile or those hiding in the mountains. During my visit, RTP broadcast a documentary on Falintil, which now numbers around 600 guerrillas. The documentary, clandestinely made by a British filmmaker, contained footage of David Alex, a 21-year veteran in the struggle against the Indonesian military and third in the Falintil command. He is well known to the East Timorese, but few had ever seen him or heard his voice until the broadcast.

Despite these openings, East Timor remains a place where few dare to speak their minds in public and even fewer dare to invite foreigners into their homes. "We are very happy that the world has recognized our suffering with the Nobel Prize," a middle-aged woman told me in a brief conversation on a shady street, "but we still live in a prison." Our talk ended abruptly when a stranger appeared.

The streets of Dili are empty by 9pm. According to several people I interviewed, Indonesian soldiers randomly attack people, especially youths, who are outside at night. Matters are worse in rural areas, where the Catholic Church has less of a presence. "Outside the towns, people are at the total mercy of the Indonesian military," one priest said.

Increasing international scrutiny has forced Indonesia to be more discreet in dealing with suspected pro-independence activists. But arrests, torture and extrajudicial executions are still common, human rights researchers say.

Such repression, however, has not stilled opposition to Indonesia's authority. Open protests have been a sporadic occurrence since November 1994, when 28 East Timorese students and workers occupied the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta during President Clinton's visit to Indonesia. Demonstrations and riots erupted in Dili and in other towns.

Protesters sometimes target Indonesian settlers and businesses, a manifestation of the deep resentment caused by the large-scale migration of Indonesians into the territory. There are upwards of 150,000 Indonesian migrants in East Timor (out of a population of 800,000 to 900,000), according to researchers. This influx, combined with administrative corruption and the destruction caused by the war, has overwhelmed the indigenous population. Joblessness and under-employment, especially among the young East Timorese, are high.

Indonesia maintains order through a highly visible military force of 20,000 to 30,000 troops and an extensive administrative apparatus. But a sophisticated underground resistance in the towns and villages challenges its authority. The underground has strong links to Falintil guerrillas in the mountains and to the resistance's diplomatic front abroad, led by Ramos Horta.

I saw this firsthand when I spent 24 hours during my trip with David Alex and 10 of the 150 Falintil guerrillas under his command. Underground activists drove me to a rural safe house, where I was taken on a lengthy hike to the guerrillas' mountain camp. My transport in and out of the region relied on the cooperation of numerous people from many walks of life, exposing the hollowness of Indonesia's claims that the resistance is marginalized and isolated within East Timor.

Many East Timorese told me that only the United States, Indonesia's longtime military and economic patron, has the clout to pressure the Jakarta government into resolving the conflict. Successive U.S. administrations have provided Indonesia with billions in aid since the 1975 invasion, despite United Nations resolutions calling upon Indonesia to withdraw and allow the East Timorese to determine their own future.

Bill Clinton, who called U.S. policy toward East Timor "unconscionable" before he became president, seems just as beholden as his predecessors to the lure of Indonesia, which Richard Nixon once called "by far the greatest prize" in Southeast Asia. The Clinton administration has provided Indonesia with almost $400 million in economic aid, and has sold or licensed the sale of $270 million in weaponry.

Meanwhile, East Timor teeters on the edge of increased violence. On December 24, 100,000 people gathered in Dili to welcome Bishop Belo back from receiving the Nobel Prize in Oslo. Youths in the crowd, apparently fueled by rumors of an Indonesian military plot to assassinate Belo, attacked two men who they suspected of being in the Indonesian military and killed another carrying a pistol and a walkie-talkie. (Belo had announced a month before that the military had twice made attempts on his life.)

In the past few weeks, rioting has broken out in two different regions of the territory. Indonesian troops have responded with a major crackdown and numerous arrests. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Virginia.), after a recent three-day visit to East Timor, described the atmosphere as one of "terror" and "total and complete fear."

Some East Timorese I met on my recent visit expressed fears that the violence and repression will intensify. "The people here are desperate," one priest said. "If the situation does not change soon, there will be much more bloodshed."

Matthew Jardine is co-author of East Timor's Unfinished Struggle: Inside the Timorese Resistance (South End Press).

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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In the Years of Living Dangerously

T. H. Watkins

THE ADMIRAL'S BABY
By Laurens van der Post
Morrow. 340 pp. $27.50

SECRET: For the Minister Only — Sir: as requested, I herewith present a summary evaluation of the late Col. Laurens van der Post's account of his post-war service on behalf of His Majesty's government on the Indonesian island of Java, 21 August, 1945 to 31 May, 1947. It is, I believe you will agree, a most remarkable document, coming from a man in his 89th year and best known for his work on the peoples and environment of the African continent.

In The Admiral's Baby, the first full public account of the events in question, the colonel's story begins where another ends: on a moonlit night in Bandoeng, Java, after the Japanese surrender. He and his fellow war prisoners had just been released after three years in captivity (see the same author's The Night Of The New Moon). The colonel could have gone home, but he was the highest-ranked British Army officer left in Java. The Japanese needed him. Until Allied troops could get there, the Japanese had been charged by their High Command to protect all released prisoners and maintain the peace. Not an easy task. The island seethed with a nationalistic determination to challenge the colonial rule of the Dutch, who, before expeditiously (some said precipitously) surrendering to the Japanese in 1942, had controlled Java and its neighbors since the Napoleonic Wars. The Dutch, for their part, seemed to believe that they could return as if nothing had changed. Van der Post knew the people of Java well, had spent enough time in Japan before the war to have learned the language, and, having been born in South Africa, could speak High Dutch. He seemed the perfect mediator.

And so he was, at least by his own account. There is no reason to doubt it. It is true that he succumbs occasionally to a rather spurious modesty, revealing, while blushing handsomely, that everyone from His Majesty King George V to Admiral Lord Mountbatten considered his work to have been unique, brave, brilliant and of great value to his nation. Well, it appears that it was all of that — not just during the chaotic and often bloody weeks before the arrival of enough British troops to keep Dutch supporters and Indonesian nationalists from murdering each other but in the months that followed, when the colonel desperately tried to broker an arrangement that would both recognize a valid nationalism at work and allow the Dutch to maintain their powerful economic presence. He saw the opportunity, he writes, as one of those "moments of innocence" when "the past is wiped from the mind," leaving only "a signal from life that what has happened must never be allowed to happen again. . . ."

Still weak with malaria and the debilitating effects of prison, the colonel exhausted himself trekking into the interior to meet with Ahmed Soekarno (Sukarno) and other nationalist leaders hidden in the jungles of the Sunda; bickered constantly with devious Dutch officials; got shot at intermittently; and wrote endless memoranda (his longest report, an admirably lucid chronicle outlining every nuance of the situation in Java since the end of the war, is reproduced in its entirety). He even traveled to Number 10 Downing Street and to the Hague with his plea for conciliation.

It was not to be. In the end, his effort sank in what he describes as "a porridge of negation." An agreement was indeed reached, but after the departure of British forces, the Dutch, "blind to the history of their own making," refused to honor it, starting a four-year war that they lost. The failure left van der Post more anguished than bitter, perhaps wondering, as the American economist Paul Schuster Taylor once wondered, if what we learn from history is that we learn nothing from history.

Sir, I think you will find The Admiral's Baby a sometimes exciting, often sad, and always moving narrative, redolent of a high-minded patriotism and an unembarrassed idealism (if perhaps just a whiff of elitism, too: I wonder whether the Indonesians truly felt that they owed a debt of gratitude to Britain for its relatively benign, if brief, rule under Stamford Raffles 200 years ago; colonialism is colonialism). And if the colonel's mystical divagations sometimes get in the way of the story, that story and his central role in it are of a stature that makes it easy to accept them as tolerable interruptions.

Oh, yes — you will want to know the origin of the account's title. It is taken from a message sent from Admiral Sir Wilfred Patterson, commanding the Fifth Cruiser Squadron, to Admiral Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Commander Allied Forces South East Asia, regarding the difficulty of dealing with the Javanese situation while hampered from above: "We can continue to rock the baby to sleep only if you people outside the house would not make so much noise."

This anecdote provides a rare note of humor in a report otherwise gravid with appropriate solemnity, and I believe it may be forgiven.

Respectfully submitted.

When the Going Was Good

Alan Ryan

GRAND TOURS AND COOK'S TOURS: A History of Leisure Travel, 1750 to 1915
By Lynne Withey
Morrow. 401pp. $30

ARTHUR FROMMER changed my life. In 1966, against all advice and armed only with a copy of his Europe On $5 A Day, I set off on my own three-month grand tour. I'm certain now that my first breath of jet-fuel-scented Heathrow air was no more intoxicating to me than the smells of Calais or Ostende were to travelers in the last century. But it was Thomas Cook who changed their lives, delivering them to the continent thoroughly booked and bevouchered.

Cook, like Frommer in our time, changed human history. Until the middle of the 19th century, when he recognized and expanded the possibilities of a business he had actually started as a sideline, travel had been the exclusive pleasure of the rich.

The history of that change — from the expensive grand tour made by scions of the British upper classes to the shorter and cheaper group trips arranged by Cook and others — is the subject of Lynne Withey's informative and highly readable book. Setting sensible limits on a huge and amorphous mass of information, Withey omits explorers and business travelers from her tale, and she deals wisely and briefly with the tiresome distinction some writers still want to make between "traveler" and "tourist."

The 18th-century grand tour was mainly educational (not excluding sex education — one stop, Venice, was considered "the brothel of Europe"), and "the appearance of a gentleman" was required for admission to Versailles — if you lacked the necessary sword, however, one could be rented on the spot. Withey makes good use of travel narratives by Boswell, Smollett, Goethe, William Beckford, Arthur Young and many others to illustrate the delights, the dangers, and, all too often, the disappointments of foreign travel. Changing tastes in art and literature were both cause and effect of changing attitudes. Withey demonstrates how an early view of mountains as ominous and unattractive gave way to a search for picturesque landscapes and "complaints about overcrowding and desecration of pristine scenery." Tourists, it seems, have always and everywhere resented other tourists.

Withey's range of relevant subjects is immense, and she deals gracefully with such topics as the Englishman abroad, the importance of roads built by Napoleon, the growing prosperity of the working class, the blurring of social distinctions in travel, the earliest guidebooks by John Murray and Karl Baedeker, the new habit of dining in public restaurants, the growing view of travel as "escape," the increasing popularity of travel among women, the expansion of railroads, and the ways in which easier and more comfortable travel robbed the experience of its "foreignness."

A parade of colorful characters moves through Withey's story: Thomas Cook, W.H. Smith, George Pullman, Cesar Ritz, Auguste Escoffier, and many others. And there are the sights themselves, of course, as well as hotels, from the Pera Palace in Constantinople and Shepheard's in Cairo to the Catskill Mountain House.

Less successful are a section on Switzerland (of interest mainly to readers of a mountain climbing inclination and a wearyingly long closing chapter on the development of the American West. There are some odd omissions, too, such as Francis Calton's 1855 The Art Of Travel, which, for four decades, gave advice on everything from the correct way to roll up shirt sleeves to the "management of savages."

Still, the broad subject of travel touches every field of human effort and a dizzying spectrum of attitudes and aspirations. Overall, Withey does a wonderful job of marshaling all this disparate data into a lively and revealing story of why and how people traveled in the past and the ways in which, just like us, they have gawked at, been puzzled by, have condemned, and, occasionally, have praised the places and people they met.



ILLUSTRATION ANTHONY RUSSO

Odyssey of a Young Girl

Linda Barrett Osborne

THE SASKIAD
By Brian Hall
Houghton Mifflin. 380pp. $23.95

SOME books open at the touch like an enchanted door. So it is with this inspired coming-of-age story of Saskia, a taleteller extraordinaire and the offspring of a spiritual commune. Brian Hall weaves together myth and mystery, philosophy and psychology, astronomy and adventure to create a novel wise in the complexities of adolescence and the human heart.

Twelve when the book begins, Saskia is a lonely misfit at her rural junior high school outside Ithaca, New York. Her self-contained and powerful mother, Lauren, maintains a rundown farm. Her father, Thomas, a Danish boatman, left one day without explanation when Saskia was a little girl. Now mother and daughter share the commune with a self-important poet who calls his haiku "moment essences" and with a blunt, bitter woman whose four children Saskia raises. To assuage her loneliness, Saskia pursues Indian transfer student Jane Singh, a rebellious, sexually precocious beauty who becomes her friend.

Saskia also takes refuge in her imagination, a mega-imagination as broad and dense and sparkling as the Milky Way: "Our galaxy is a disk, our sun a minor star near the edge. You can look up out of the disk into the intergalactic void, or you can peer down the length of the disk . . . where clusters and double-stars swarm thick as cream. Imagine! You are seeing with your own naked eyes the entire length of the galaxy! . . . If that doesn't make your problems feel small, Saskia doesn't know what does."

Perspective in adolescence being fleeting, Saskia invents an alternate world. She gives herself a leading role in the stories of Marco Polo, Odysseus, Horatio Hornblower and especially the medieval astronomer Tycho Brahe. It is no accident that they are all journeyers and explorers, for Saskia is also on the biggest quest of all: to discover herself.

Re-enter Thomas, who takes Saskia and Jane on an expedition through northern Scandinavia, their ultimate goal being to stop construction of a dam Thomas says will ruin the environment. Although Saskia spends days on end with her father, he is as elusive as ever. He is a visionary whose moods change dramatically, intense and angry, in eloquent sympathy with the natural world but impatient with its human inhabitants. He is also a storyteller who enthralls the girls with accounts of his combat with whale-murdering villains who break international law. He is always the hero of his own tales. There is an edge of brutality and ambiguous morality about him.

Thomas returns with Saskia to the farm, where he and Lauren resume their relationship. He brings security, competence and order, and the children adore him, although he brooks no opposition or sentimentality. But Saskia fears it cannot last. Thomas tells her, "You and I are like crystal. Most people are just glass. The world sings a note to them and they can't feel it. But we hum.' Saskia loved that image. 'But you have to be careful. You have to know when to stop humming, because crystal will shatter.'" His words are a portent and a clue to the past.

Although Thomas is a strong character, Saskia dominates the novel. Her passage from childhood to adult awareness is not arrow-straight — she is as clumsy, embarrassed, excessive, frightened and self-critical as any adolescent — but she has vision and grit, and she's a true original. She works at being popular and sexy but with a secret plan to infiltrate and chastise the philistines. She gets in shape and tans herself under a sunlamp in order "to be dark and whip-thin, without grossness or excess, the essence of herself, a rod of apple wood stained with walnut juice and polished with beeswax, a scourge of the unrighteous. Is that so much to ask?" She sees and feels with a sense of beauty and wonder, couched in Hall's lyrical language. Lauren's hair, which Saskia is allowed to brush on special nights, "might crudely be called auburn, but it has claims on copper and bronze and a faintly pink rust, and it hints in some lights at things more exotic, like cinnabar and peach. . . . She gathers the mass like a pile of autumn leaves and deposits it in back, where it hangs almost to the floor. A tapestry of hair . . ."

And, like any other true heroine, Saskia must endure exile and suffer the pain of self-knowledge before her story ends. There are many surprises and truths to be revealed in The Saskiad, but Brian Hall is wise enough to realize that they are most satisfying when they grow from understanding, not from need, and help to make us stronger.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
March 16 1997

Hi-tech has turned distance learning into higher education's Holy Grail. **Anne Nicholls** studies the arrival of the 'virtual classroom'

On the far side of knowledge

A *SATELLITE* link-up between De Montfort University in Leicester and a number of study centres in the Netherlands this month marks the launch of a new distance learning course in environmental science.

The three-month course will operate through a network of "virtual classrooms", where students and tutors can interact through a computer conferencing system and participate in discussions with European experts on environmental issues. It will be followed, in September, by a course entitled Food in Europe, being offered in a similar mode by De Montfort, the Open University of the Netherlands and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Uppsala.

The idea is that students will ultimately be able to take the courses at any one of 12 European study centres and gain transferable credits through any partner universities.

Meanwhile University College, Suffolk, is busily establishing a network of education centres, from the Azores to the Arctic. Its mission is to end rural isolation by bringing education within the reach of country-dwellers.

With the help of a European Socrates grant, the college has set up an electronic conferencing system called First Class, which puts students in touch with education centres by e-mail. This system has already helped the Swedes to train primary school teachers, and Suffolk College will shortly start a similar scheme in Lapland — based around the Arctic town of Tromso — and in the Azores.

The British Education '96 exhibition in Hong Kong provided evidence of the snowballing interest in open and distance learning. At the previous event, in 1994, the number of such courses available overseas numbered less than 50; now there are more than 400 offered by universities, colleges and professional associations.

The most popular subjects are in business and management, notably Masters in Business Administration. Several places, including Southampton Institute, offer MBAs through computer conferencing and the Internet. Other popular subjects include accounting and finance, education, law, computer sciences/IT, health studies, and theology and religious studies.

The more unusual courses include an MSc in forensic and legal psychology (Leicester university), a diploma in palliative medicine (University of Wales), degrees/diplomas in theatre and opera (Rose Bruford College) and a sailing certificate (Carlisle College).

The Open University business school is a prime example of how the demand for distance learning has escalated internationally. Five years ago, there were no overseas students; now they account for 30 per cent (about 6,000) of enrolments. Within a few months of the OU launching its MBA programme, run in partnership with the Open Learning Institute in Hong Kong, it captured one-third of the MBA market in Hong Kong, in competition with around 40 other MBA providers.

"Distance learning is very convenient because it allows people to carry on working while they study," says Tony Stapleton, lecturer at the OU business school. "For the universities, it means they can expand without losing quality, so more can mean better. It really is the Holy Grail of higher education.

It allows people to carry on working while they study, and for the universities it means they can expand without losing quality

"It is vital to work closely with local partners when introducing distance learning overseas. This means setting up an infrastructure by training local tutors in quality control and setting up student support systems. Our business school students also need access to computer conferencing facilities." Other considerations are language and cultural barriers, so the content of courses have to be adapted for the overseas market. For instance, the National Extension College sells resources (mostly maths and economics) to the Mauritius College of the Air and the University of the West Indies, which then adapt the materials for their own use as part of a programme for upgrading teachers.

This is particularly important for customers in central and eastern Europe — a difficult market to break into for a number of reasons. Students will not have access to the kind of books easily obtainable in Britain, most courses need translating, and the materials need to be adapted to include some local relevance. (What's the point of case studies about marketing cars when the only product is a Skoda?) But the most significant barrier is price. The average professional salary in the Czech capital, Prague is $50-$65 a week, which makes most distance learning courses unaffordable.

But the demand is buoyant. At a recent meeting of the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities, held in Budapest, there was great enthusiasm for the development of European-wide study centres. Even Albania, with a meagre 50 students following distance learning courses, is keen to get involved.

Providing access to e-mail tutoring and course delivery is essential in a country where the postal service is unreliable. Of equal importance is having local support networks, which often means flying tutors out to provide "summer schools" or recruiting and training local tutors.

While many of the exciting developments in distance learning are happening piecemeal in different university and college departments, a number of high-profile conferences this year will seek to create synergy. The seventh annual International Distance Learning Conference in Washington on March 24-26, for instance, will feature presentations on tele-medicine, video-conferencing and the Internet. The highlight will be a live link-up by satellite with the vice-chancellor of the Open University, Sir John Daniel.

The costs of hi-tech approaches can still be a barrier. Chris Leach, lecturer in charge of the Food in Europe programme at De Montfort University, admits that in future his projects will feature less video-conferencing and rely more on the less spectacular (but equally effective, and cheaper) e-mail. At the moment, money is available through European funds such as Socrates, Phare, Tempus and the Know-How fund for innovative distance learning projects because it's very much "flavour of the month". But whether the 21st century will see a global university without frontiers remains to be seen.

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MSc/Diploma FORENSIC & LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY

Commences: **September.**

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: Vivienne Doughty, Centre for Applied Psychology, Leicester University, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH, UK. Tel: +44 116 252 2409. Fax: +44 116 252 3994. Email: vid2@le.ac.uk

School of Archaeological Studies

MA ARCHAEOLOGY & HERITAGE

Analysis, Interpretation and Management

Commences: **September 1997** (subject to validation).

For more information, quoting ref GW397, please contact: Dr. Alan McWhirr, School of Archaeological Studies, Leicester University, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH, UK. Tel: +44 116 252 2729. Fax: +44 116 252 5005. Email: adm3@le.ac.uk URL: http://www.le.ac.uk/archaeology/

Centre for Labour Market Studies

MSc TRAINING
MSc TRAINING & HRM
DIPLOMA IN TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT
DIPLOMA IN HRM

Commences: **April and October.**

For more information, quoting ref GW397 please contact: CLMS, Leicester University, 7 Salisbury Road, Leicester LE1 7QR, UK. Tel: +44 116 252 5950. Fax: +44 116 252 5953. Email: clms1@le.ac.uk URL: http://www.clms.le.ac.uk/

Centre for Mass Communication Research

MA MASS COMMUNICATIONS

Commences: **April and October.**

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: Course Secretary, CMCR, Leicester University, 104 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 7LT, UK. Tel: +44 116 252 5275. Fax: +44 116 252 5276. Email: cmcr-dl@le.ac.uk URL: http://www.le.ac.uk/mc/mcpgdl.html

Centre for Research into Sport and Society

MSc/Diploma SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT AND SPORTS MANAGEMENT

Various commencement dates.

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: Margaret Milsom, CRSS, Leicester University, 14 Salisbury Road, Leicester LE1 7RQ, UK. Tel: +44 116 252 5930. Fax: +44 116 252 5720. Email: crss@le.ac.uk URL: http://www.le.ac.uk/crss/

School of Education

MA APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL
MA PRIMARY EDUCATION

Commences: **May, September and January.**

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: Bridget Walsh, School of Education, Leicester University, 21 University Road, Leicester LE1 7RF, UK. Tel: +44 116 252 3674 (24 hrs). Fax: +44 116 252 3653. Email: bw11@le.ac.uk URL: http://www.le.ac.uk/depts/se/se.html

Educational Management Development Unit

MBA EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Commences: **Anytime.**

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: EMDU, Leicester University, The University Centre, Barrack Road, Northampton NN2 6AF, UK. Tel: +44 1604 30180. Fax: +44 1604 231136. Email: emdu@le.ac.uk URL: http://www.le.ac.uk/education/centres/emdu/index.html

International Centre for Management, Law and Industrial Relations, Faculty of Law
10th Anniversary 1997

MA/LLM & DIPLOMA IN LAW AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

Commences: **September.**

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: Fiona Gelling. Tel: +44 116 252 2371. Email: fg10@le.ac.uk

LLM/MA EUROPEAN MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT LAW

Commences: **October.**

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: Susan Thornton. Tel: +44 116 252 2346. Email: st22@le.ac.uk

International Centre for Management, Law and Industrial Relations, Leicester University, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH, UK. Fax: +44 116 252 2699. URL: http://www.le.ac.uk/depts/ic/

Management Centre

MBA
MSc FINANCE
MSc MARKETING
DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT
CERTIFICATE IN MANAGEMENT

Commences: **January, April, July and October.**

See Department Profile.

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: Leicester University Management Centre, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH, UK. Tel: +44 116 252 3952. Fax: +44 116 252 3949. Email: lumc@le.ac.uk

Scarman Centre for the Study of Public Order

MSc CRIMINAL JUSTICE STUDIES
MSc STUDY OF SECURITY MANAGEMENT
MSc RISK, CRISIS AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Commences: **February and September.**

See Department Profile.

For more information quoting ref GW397 please contact: Distance Learning Administrator, Scarman Centre, Leicester University, The Friars, 154 Upper New Walk, Leicester LE1 7QA, UK. Fax: +44 116 252 5766/3944. Tel: +44 116 252 3946/5774. Email: dlsc@le.ac.uk URL: http://www.le.ac.uk/scarman/

Further information

For information about the University and all its courses contact: **Emma Griffin, Higher Degrees Office, Leicester University, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH, UK. Fax: +44 116 252 2447. Email: eeg2@le.ac.uk**

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For the job profile and an application form please contact the UK Personnel Recruitment Hotline on 0181-943 7797 or email jrr@tearfund.dircon.co.uk



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Call 44 (0) 1708 3711821 for full Job Description.



MERLIN (Medical Emergency Relief International) is a British medical charity providing emergency medical care in disaster zones worldwide. Current countries of operation include Afghanistan, Chechnya, Liberia, Siberia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Uganda and Zaire.

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GREENPEACE international

Greenpeace is at the forefront in placing environmental issues at the top of the global agenda. Greenpeace International (GPI), a non-governmental organisation based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, is the co-ordinating body of 32 Greenpeace national and multi-national offices world-wide. As the world's leading environmental campaigning organisation, it is essential that we enhance public awareness of its value and further its campaign goals.

Greenpeace International has a vacancy for a

Communications Director

to lead the communications department of GPI in Amsterdam.

The Job

You will be responsible for the output of the Communications Department: photo, video and press work.
You will develop and implement visionary, innovative and realistic communication plans, within the strategic priorities of Greenpeace International, in order to successfully project and strengthen the position of Greenpeace
You will supervise and motivate a team of 19 communication professionals and provide guidance with regard to their activities.
You will act as a high level spokes-person for the organisation.

Experience

You are able to demonstrate a high level of achievement across a range of media disciplines and you have a good understanding of branding issues. International exposure and a high political awareness are part of your past work experience. Your managerial career shows your aptitude to work in a senior management position.

Personal Profile

You are an outstanding communicator, a strategic thinker and a natural team leader. Flexibility, stamina and an ability to motivate others are part of your core strengths. An English mother tongue or an excellent command of English as a second language is essential. Other additional languages are a definite advantage.

This position is based in Amsterdam and a relocation package will be offered to the successful candidate, if necessary. Interviews will take place in Amsterdam. Please send your full CV with covering letter to Amelia Domina, Greenpeace International, Keizersgracht 176, 1016 DW Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Closing date for completed applications: 1 April 1997

Greenpeace aims to be an equal opportunities employer

http://www.greenpeace.org

University of Wales Cardiff

Postgraduate Study in Language and Communication

PhD in Language and Communication

The Centre for Language and Communication Research welcomes PhD applications in particular in the areas of sociolinguistics and social scientific approaches to language and communication, discourse analysis and pragmatics, applied linguistics, systemic functional linguistics and computational linguistics, and disordered communication.

MA / Diploma in Language and Communication Research

This is a taught scheme (full or part-time) for those wishing to develop research skills in language and communication (including mass communications) for career development in professional or commercial spheres, or as a step to a PhD.

Both the Centre and the MA are accredited by the Economic and Social Research Council for research quality (Mode A Recognition and Advanced Course Recognition), and the Centre has the highest UK ratings for research and teaching (RAE 5 and TQA Excellent).

Some studentships may be obtainable for the above schemes. Applicants wishing to be considered for these must send a completed application form to us by 20th March. Application forms and instructions can be obtained from **Julia Bullough SECAP, UWCC, Cardiff, CF1 3XB. Tel. 01222/874243. Fax. 01222/874242. E-mail:Bullough@Cardiff.ac.uk**

MA/Diploma in Applied Linguistics is also offered by the Centre.



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Cut-off date for applications: 14 July 1997. For further information please contact The MSc in Public Relations Office, Film & Media Studies Department, Faculty of Art, Stirling University, Stirling, FK9 4LA, Tel 01786 466220 Fax 01786 466226

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Science Park, Aberystwyth, SY23 3AH, Wales, UK
Fax: +44 1970 622 619
(Please mark your request - DISTANCE LEARNING or FULL-TIME)

Department of Languages & European Studies

Chair in European Studies Ref 9702/320

A leading international scholar is sought to head the Department's Centre for Research in European Societies and Cultures, and to develop the Department's teaching at postgraduate and undergraduate level in the field of European Studies. The successful candidate will have a background in the social and political sciences or history, specialising in one or more aspects of Europe. Fields of specialism may include: European integration, comparative politics, IR, transitional studies, cultural studies, economics or business studies.

In addition to English, fluency in a second European language (preferably French or German) is sought.

Professorial salaries are negotiable. Participation in consultancy work will be actively encouraged. Continuing appointments, secondments or fixed-term contracts will be considered, with appropriate remuneration.

Anyone wishing to discuss the post informally may approach Professor Paul Chilton, Head of Department, or the Secretary-Registrar, Mr David Packham. Tel: 0121 359 3611.

Two Readerships and Two Lectureships in French and/or European Studies Ref 9703/320

Salaries up to £33,202 and, exceptionally, to £35,893 pa

The Department is making appointments to develop research and teaching in the above areas. The successful applicants will have a proven research record and teaching experience in two of the following academic areas:

- European history, political thought, comparative politics, culture, political culture, integration studies including legal, economic and business aspects;
- French language, history, contemporary society, social movements, politics, media, economics, business, law, cultural studies.

Successful applicants in the subject area of French will be expected to teach in French and to contribute to the Department's French language teaching. For candidates specialising in European Studies, fluency in French or German will be sought.

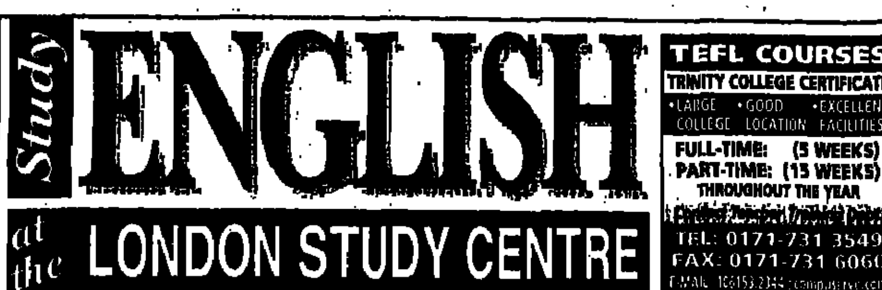
Continuing appointments are available at Reader level for applicants with proven research records. The terms of appointment for Lecturers will depend upon the background and experience of particular candidates. The minimum period for which Lectureship appointments are made is normally three years, with the possibility of renewal or subsequent transfer to continuing appointments.

Informal enquiries may be directed to Professor Paul Chilton on 0121 359 3611 ext 4210.

Application forms and further information for all posts, are available from the Personnel Officer (Academic Staff), Aston University, Aston Triangle, Birmingham B4 7ET. Tel: 0121 359 0870 (24 hour answerphone). Fax: 0121 359 6470. Email: h.a.wilcox@aston.ac.uk quoting the appropriate reference number. Closing date: 31st March 1997.



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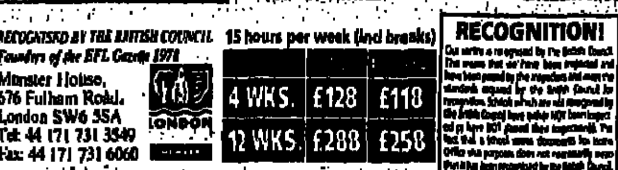


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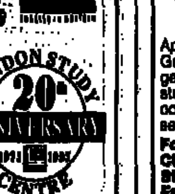


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Bulgaria/Romania **£21,605 pa**

In Central and Eastern Europe, SCF supports the process of transition in the key areas of poverty alleviation, child care, juvenile justice, local NGO development, and humanitarian assistance.

The long-term priority in Bulgaria is to improve child care policy and practice. Helping to build the capacity of local non-governmental organisations will be a significant aspect of this work, as will policy advice to local and national government agencies.

Currently, the economic crisis in Bulgaria has also brought about a need for humanitarian assistance.

Both long and short-term programmes seek to address long-standing issues concerning children with disabilities, children in residential care, alternatives to institutional care, protection of children's rights and preventative work with children at risk.

To date in Romania, much work has been done on the scope and range of reform required to improve juvenile justice policy and practice and we support a small scale disability project associated with Romanian Save the Children.

Based in Sophia, you will manage and develop the programme ensuring it is effective in meeting children's needs within the frame-work of SCF regional and global programme strategy. The first step will be to produce a country strategy for both Bulgaria and Romania. You will need particular expertise in the area of organisational development, local capacity building and humanitarian assistance.

For both of these posts you will also have substantial financial resource and staff management experience. You will demonstrate strong analytical and conceptual skills and the ability to represent and negotiate on SCF's behalf at a senior level.

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To apply for the **Malawi** role, please write to Jenny Thomas, Overseas Personnel, SCF, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD. Fax: 0171 793 7610. Closing date: 4th April 1997. For more details about the role in **Bulgaria/Romania**, please contact Maggie Innes, Eastern and Central Europe Division, SCF, Cambridge House, Cambridge Grove, London W6 0LE or fax 0181 741 4605. Closing date: 11th April 1997.

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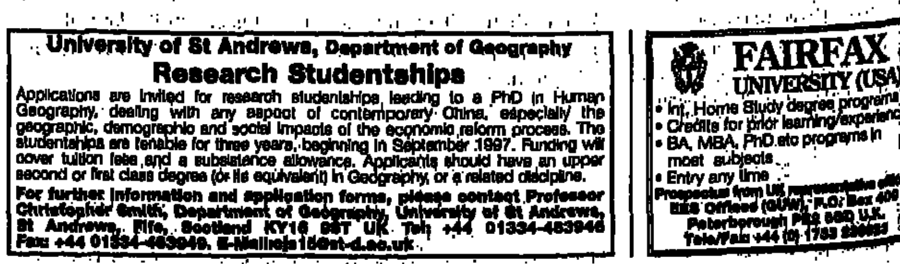
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For further information and application forms, please contact Professor Christopher Smith, Department of Geography, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, Fife, Scotland KY16 9ST UK. Tel: +44 01334-463946 Fax: +44 01334-463949. E-Mail: cjs1@st-and.ac.uk

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The International Leadership Academy is the first United Nations institution globally devoted to leadership in its multifaceted dimensions. It was officially launched by UN Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali and Advisory Committee Chair HM Queen Noor of Jordan, at the UN, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, in October 1995. It seeks to enhance the commitment of beginning leaders and potential leaders to UN values through the exercise of responsible leadership in various fields. Its innovative pedagogical approach relies on interactive learning about leadership directly from successful leaders.

The ILA 1997 Leadership Programme is scheduled (June 1-22) to take place in Amman, Jordan, and will consist of three weeks of seminars and some travel in the region: (1) The United Nations and Global Leadership Forum; (2) Leadership Skills Forum; (3) South-South Leadership Forum; (4) Leadership: Peace and Security Forum; and (5) the International Leadership Forum. Distinguished speakers include:

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HE Jan Egeland, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Norway
HE Osama El Baz, Senior Political Advisor to President Mubarak of Egypt
HE Ambassador Owada, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations
HE Abdul Salam Majali, former Prime Minister of Jordan
HE Shimon Peres, former Prime Minister of Israel
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Lord Ian Gilmour, former UK Minister of Defense
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The Hon Thomas S Foley, former Speaker of US House of Representatives
Sir David Steel, President of the Liberal International
HE HUI Yongzheng, China's Deputy Minister for Science and Technology
HE Nafis Sadiq, Executive Director of UNFPA, and UN Under-Secretary General
HE Nitin Desai, UN Under-Secretary General (UNCED)
HE Alvaro de Soto, UN Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs
Senior Advisor to the Danish Minister of Social Development, Mr Jacques Baudot
US Congressman Paul Findley. US Congressman Paul McCloseky
Mr Andres Pastrana, Secretary General of Union of Latin American Parties
HE Harlan Cleveland, Former Nato Ambassador and President of the World Academy of Art and Science
HM King Hussein has graciously accepted to speak at the closing session.

Cost: The subsidized cost of the entire programme will be US$ 2,900 for candidates from the developing nations and US$ 3,900 for candidates from the industrialized nations for three weeks of seminars in Amman, hotel accommodation, two meals a day, and some travel in the region

Applications with CV, references and tel and fax numbers are invited, by 30 March 1997, from outstanding candidates, aged 25 to 45 who are already in beginning, or likely to be in, leadership positions in Diplomacy, Government, Academia, Journalism, Cultural, Economic and Scientific spheres, and NGOs.

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Sabrina fair and wild

Paul Evans

GEESE honk in a wild quicksilver sky. There's a new urgency in their voices as they struggle in a world that is moving so fast: seasons, clouds, wind, rain and the river. This January was the driest for more than 100 years. February brought gales with wind speeds of up to 100mph in northwest Scotland and wild storms which rattled most of Britain with a similar velocity. Even so, the traditional "February-fill-dyke" did not replenish all areas and there are deep anxieties in many parts of England about the future of water supplies. This is a rapidly changing world, and this spring, with environmental, social and political change in the wind, the urgent cries of the wild geese have a deeper resonance.

Here in Shropshire, the rains have liberated many ancient features in the landscape. Springs bubble up under holly trees in the woods. Despite the efforts of farmers to drain as much land as they can, many boggy flashes reclaim their places in the fields. These seasonal wetlands, which replenish streams trickling through the countryside, not only give a sense of the landscape before industrialised agriculture bludgeoned it into the shape it is now, they also become symbolic of an irrepressible spirit in nature.

In some parts of the country rivers have flooded. Although these floods are not on the same scale as many readers around the world will have experienced, they do warn even the complacent British that there is a nature beyond human governance. The flowing waters were once revered and associated with river goddesses. The River Severn, whose spirit was called Sabrina, flows from mid-Wales, through the Welsh Marches down to the Bristol Channel. For much of the year, the upper reaches of the river seem placid. But there are times when the character of the river changes dramatically and the wild spirit of Sabrina wakes to demand respect.

Barely contained within its banks, the Severn surges and churns under the double bridges at Atcham. Despite the cold raging fury of the river, a little band of mallards slalom lightly under the medieval stone and the modern concrete bridges, just for the hell of it. The river swings passed the Mytton and Mermaid Hotel — where legendary Mad Jack Mytton fished a mermaid from the Severn — and the old church of the Celtic saint Eata.

Above the trees, at the edge of the ridge and furrow water meadows, a buzzard hangs for a moment on the wind before the rooks give chase. Then suddenly the whole rookery takes to the air in a swirling, raggedy black column before dispersing down the wind. A few days ago these fields were flooded. Now most of the water has rejoined the river's powering course as it whips through the countryside like a great cable, dragging the wild Welsh gales down from the hills. But not all the floodwater has hitched to the Severn's flow.

Beside the island — a medieval eel-trap — is an ox-bow with half-submerged snagtoothed willows. Here, the river reclaims the outer edge of a meander from its older course. Hundreds of yards across the field is another wider, older ox-bow, where pools slowly trickle, welly-deep, away from the river, to the reedy edge of a river terrace formed centuries ago. Around the sweeping arc of the ox-bow lake are ancient oaks with massive knobbly roots which have survived countless floods. These huge, dark, flood-sentinel oaks have long been part of the Severn's shifting flow through the land, as she reclaims and retreats through paths carved over millennia with awesome violence and gentle subtlety.

Chess Leonard Barden

GARRY KASPAROV has blamed his 1993-95 setbacks — when he lost several games to computers, failed to win some tournaments and got divorced — on spending too much time on Russian politics and business projects. Kasparov has resolved to be a more single-minded chess player, and his impressive win at Linares will convince many sceptics that the old Kasparov of the late eighties is back.

He scored 8½/11, ahead of Kramnik 7½, Adams (who lost only to Kasparov) and Topalov 6½, Polgar 6 (her best yet). Ivanchuk recovered from lamenting his early defeats to a respectable 5/11 and even won with the King's Gambit. Though Linares's sponsor Luis Rentero no longer runs the event, the influence of his bonuses for attacking play and few draws remains: Linares 1997 sparked many fine games.

Nikolic-Topalov

1 d4 g6 2 c4 Bg7 3 Nf3 d6 4 g3 c5 5 d5 b5!? Good psychology. The normal Benko Gambit 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 allows White a variety of formations, while here Nikolic is committed to the slow g3 system.

6 cxb5 a6 7 bxa6 Nf6 8 Nc3 0-0 9 Bg2 Bf5 10 0-0 Nxa6 11 Ne1 Qd7 12 e4 Bh3 13 Rb1 Rfb8 14 b3 Bxg2 15 Nxg2? 15 Kxg2!? guards h3, as White soon discovers. **Ng4 16 Bb2 Nc7 17 Qc2 Bd4 18 Kh1 Ne5 19 Qe2 Qc8 20 f4 Ng4 21 Qf3 Rb4 22 h3? Ne5! 23 Resigns**

Kasparov-Polgar

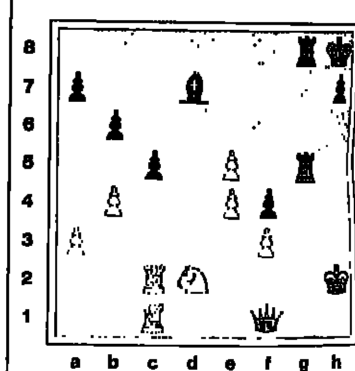
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 Qc7 6 Be2 a6 7 0-0 Nf6 8 Be3 Bb4 9 Na4 Bd6 A well-known line, where Black hopes for sharp play, but Kasparov just looks for Q-side space and open lines. **10 g3 Be7 11 c4 d6 12 f3 Bd7 13 Rc1 0-0 14 Nxc6 Bxc6 15 Nb6 Rad8 16 b4 Qb8 17 b5 Be8 18 a4 Nd7 19 Nxd7 Rxd7 20 Qb3 Qc7 21 Rfd1 Rd8 22 Bd4 Ra8 23 Qc3 axb5 24 cxb5!?** Most players would recapture 24 axb5 without a thought, but Kasparov instead stays a pawn down for several moves, relying on his active pieces to break Judit's Q-side defences.

Qxc3 25 Rxc3 Rxa4 26 Rc7 Bg5 27 Bf2 Not 27 Rxb7? Rxd4! **b6 28 Rb7 Ra2 29 Bf1 Rb2 30 f4 Bf6 31 Rxb6 Bc3 32 Rb7 g5 33 f5 Bb4 34 f6 h5 35 Rc1 Kh7 36 Rb8 d5 37 exd5 Bd6 38 Rd8 Be5 39 Rcc8 Bxb5 40 Bxb5 Rxd8 41 Bd3+ Resigns**

Anatoly Karpov, the big name missing from Linares, had a slanging match with Rentero after deciding to stand at a Duma byelection in his old home town Tula, where he polled a very respectable 31,000 votes. Rentero said he would never invite Karpov again; Karpov replied that the under-16 Fide Olympiad which he helps organise would be removed from Linares.

Smith & Williamson, the investment managers, are giving £25,000 to the British Championships at Hove (August 4-16). With a £10,000 first prize, expect serious competition between Nigel Short and his young rivals Adams and Sadler.

No 2463



Samarian v Antoshin, USSR 1985. White (to play) is a queen up, but resigned in the face of the threatened Rh5+. Tal's magazine praised GM Antoshin for his imaginative attack. What did they all miss?

No 2462: 1 d4 e6 2 Na3 Ke7 3 Bg5+ Kd6 4 Qd3 Kd5 5 Qf5+ Kd4 6 0-0-0 mate.

Quick crossword no. 357

Across

1 Predicament — promise to marry (6)
4 Quoted (5)
7 Grandiose — universal (6)
8 Foetus (6)
9 Expensive — address (4)
10 Marriage ceremony (8)
12 Well done! (sarcastically) (5,3,3)
17 Cooked breakfast — served in prison? (8)
19 Leave out — a large container (4)
20 Put money in (6)
21 Emblem (6)
22 Fine net fabric (5)
23 Fractured (6)

Down

1 Adage (7)
2 Dissolute (7)
3 Banal (9)
4 Celestial body (5)
5 Cyclone (7)
6 Sleepy (6)
11 Principal lecturer (9)
13 Disentangle (7)
14 Muslim face veil (7)
15 Heraldic creature with spiral horn (7)
16 Short race run at top speed (6)
18 Problem — children (5)

Last week's solution

Bridge Zia Mahmood

THREE young bridge experts were walking on the beach before a tournament when they came across a strange bottle. One picked it up, rubbed it with his sleeve, and a genie flew out. "My name", said the genie, "is Zi Ham Chag, Master Genie of Bridge. I can grant you any wish you desire. If you are not satisfied, I must return to the bottle for another thousand years; but if you are, I will at last be free!"

Being bridge players, they were more concerned with getting a fourth for a practice session; so, seated by the water's edge, they dealt this hand:

North
♠ 8 3
♥ 9 6 3
♦ A K Q J 9
♣ Q 6 3

West
♠ K J 9 6 5 2
♥ None
♦ 8 7 5 4 2
♣ 10 8

East
♠ A Q 10 4
♥ A 7 4
♦ 10 6 3
♣ K J 7

South
♠ 7
♥ K Q J 10 8 5 2
♦ None
♣ A 9 5 4 2

South	West	North	East Genie
	3♠	Pass	4♠
5♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

West led the two of spades against five hearts, and dummy followed with the three. After much thought, the genie played the four! When South won with the seven, West cried: "That's enough, he's an impostor!" South and North agreed, as it was clear that anyone who let declarer to win so cheap a trick could not possibly be a Master Genie. So they stuffed the protesting genie back into the bottle and threw him into the sea.

Later that evening, they showed the hand to the great analyst Michael Rosenberg, expecting him to chuckle over the genie's preposterous play. To their surprise, after studying the hand for several minutes, he spoke: "The problem is that South cannot reach dummy unless the defenders allow him to do so. Thus, he will on the face of it lose a spade, a heart and two clubs. But if East makes the normal play of winning the first spade and returning the suit [any switch allows declarer to reach dummy's winning diamonds], then South will ruff with the ten of hearts and lead the eight of hearts to dummy's nine. East must win with the ace. But this time, any card he returns will allow declarer an entry to dummy, and the losing clubs will all disappear on the solid diamond suit.

"But, amazingly, by allowing declarer to win the first spade with the seven in his hand, East avoids the throw-in. If South plays the eight of hearts to the nine, East simply exits with the ten of spades. South cannot discard on this, for West will overtake and play a club, and if South ruffs the ten of spades he can never reach dummy and must lose two club tricks at the finish.

"Your genie found the most wonderful play in the history of the game — and you idiots threw him back in the sea!"

(The hand is taken from Geza Ottlik and Hugh Kelsey's wonderful Adventures In Card Play. If you found it difficult to follow, I'm sorry, but it is so beautiful that I wanted to share it.) ©



Higher and wider but still handsome at 40

WHEN the British Motor Company launched the Mini almost 40 years ago, its groundbreaking design was greeted with a mixture of surprise and scepticism, *writes Stuart Millar*. It went on to become a motoring and fashion phenomenon.

Last week, the potential 21st century successor to a car as British as the monarchy or James Bond met with a similar reaction as Rover unveiled its bug-eyed concept car at the Geneva Motor Show.

Dubbed the Spiritual, the all-British car is not the new Mini due to be launched in 2000, but a revolutionary design study aimed at taking Sir Alec Issigonis's celebrated original into a third generation of production.

According to Rover, the Spiritual suggests how the Mini, which has remained virtually unchanged since its launch in 1959, might have evolved if it had been updated over time.

It is the same length as the current Mini but is designed to meet stringent crash regulations and emission demands. Like Issigonis, whose brief was to fit four people into a 10ft box, designers at Rover aimed to combine compactness with comfort. To achieve this, the Spiritual is higher and wider than the original, and the engine is tucked beneath the rear passenger seat.

Richard Williamson, of MiniWorld magazine, said: "My initial reaction was: It's horrible. But it had to be different and it had to be radical, so at second or third glance it begins to look a lot better."

Letter from the Czech Republic Michael F George

Service with a growl

THE shop assistants at my neighbourhood grocery store are a surly bunch, but then service-with-a-smile is not one of communism's legacies. Nowadays it's even possible to find some shops where the service is merely indifferent, but the women at this place are of the old school. Once I saw them rush outside to chase some hop-scotching kids off the pavement. There they stood, fists on hips, elbow to elbow, shrieking at the retreating kids. They seemed better organised as a swat team than as shop assistants.

I was given a kilo of coffee beans for my birthday. I have no grinder, but every grocery store has one, so I took my beans and grocery list to the store, bought my stuff, dumped the beans into the grinder and pushed the button.

Now these are noisy grinders, but out of the din I could hear a familiar shriek and glanced around. Everyone was looking at me. The customers probed me with that stony stare, as if I was an animal with a leg caught in a trap. The shop assistants, however, were furious.

All this took only a second to register. The coffee, I decided, was the priority, my image secondary. I turned back to the grinder. But they wouldn't be ignored. The sergeant advanced, flanking me on the left, decibels climbing. "Did you buy this coffee here? You didn't buy this coffee here! Did you! *Did you?*"

"Coffee?" I mumbled stupidly, trying to buy time.

She launched into a tirade: "Some people, some *foreigners* . . ."

I nodded and smiled in slow-witted agreement. I glanced into the hopper. Unbelievable luck! I had a fast machine. If I could only hold her off another 30 seconds . . . I turned to face her condemnation.

"Who's going to clean this machine now? Are you going to clean it? I'll tell you who! I'll have to clean it! *After* work hours!"

I tried to look as humiliated as I felt, perhaps to appeal to some latent humanity. A moment later the grinder whined free. She raised beseeching eyes to heaven, threw her hands up helplessly to our audience (by now, of course, the whole store) and returned to her post shaking her head.

I put my coffee carefully into my bag, turned around, and said in perfect Czech: "Look, you shrew, I've bought thousands of krouns worth of your sour milk, wrinkled peppers, mushy tomatoes, and filthy eggs. I wait patiently in queue, never complain, and always have the right change because God knows you never do. And as for the grinder, you're not going to clean it, you never have. It was dirty before I used it. It's probably cleaner now."

Well, you should have seen it. The long queue of grey coats and passive faces exploded into smiles and spontaneous applause. Years of resentment at just such treatment had found its voice in mine.

But I was the voice of reason. "No, friends, it's not their fault, let's help them, show them a better way. After all, we are not like them."

A murmur of assent moved through the crowd and the eyes of the now-huddled shop assistants turned to me in gratitude. "Yes," they smiled. "We see at last that customers are people too. Please forgive us."

There were misty eyes in the crowd and a couple old women shuffled forward to kiss my hand. But I couldn't stay for that. This was only one shop in a city of hundreds, and I was needed elsewhere. I stepped outside where my trusty Indian friend Tonto held my silver stallion at the ready, mounted and rode off with a hearty, "Hi-Ho Silver . . . away."

Well, that's the "American ending". The Czech ending is much simpler. Having sacrificed my week's quota of ego in three minutes, I tried to keep from running out the door. It certainly wasn't a proud exit, but it wasn't really a tail-tucked rout either. More like an indifferent slink. Considering everything, I thought it spoke very well of my character.

Notes and Queries Joseph Harker

WHY don't we have ring pulls on all cans and tins?

THIS is largely a matter of cost. "Ring-pulls" or Easy-Open (EO) ends are slightly more expensive than ordinary ends on food cans, so tend to be mainly used for premium-quality products. However, market research has shown that many consumers would be prepared to pay a few pence more for the added convenience of an easy-open can. In the UK, the proportion of food cans with EO ends stands at 22 per cent (including pet food) and is expected to rise in the next few years. — *Hilary Schrafft, The Canner magazine, Crawley, West Sussex*

RING PULLS on cans and tins may make them easier to open for the able-bodied. The story is very different for my mother (arthritic fingers) and myself (tennis elbow). We've had to stop feeding our cat Whiskas for this very reason. — *Judith Hodgkin, Montpelier, Bristol*

IF ALL the cars in Britain were converted to run on electricity, how many more power stations would be needed to cope with the extra demand?

NONE, in the likely case that future electric cars will generate their own electricity on board by fuel-cell batteries. Fuel cells generate electricity directly from a suitable fuel and air, and are considered the better long-term clean alternative to today's polluting engines by most car manufacturers. — *Samuel Stucki, Nussbaumen, Switzerland*

I UNDERSTAND that the Hungarian and Finnish languages are related because the two peoples share a common origin east of the Urals. Where?

THE hypothesis which asserts a common origin for the Hungarian and Finnish languages is based on the fact that there are about 600 words shared by Hungarian and Finnish. However, it is also true that there is an equal or greater number of words shared by Hungarian with Turkish and many other languages. Moreover, the anthropology, the mythology and the music of Hungarians are much closer to the Turkic peoples than the Finns.

If anyone wishes to know something about the research concerned with these alternative views, contact us. — *I Halász, Hungarian Historical Society, Auburn 2144, Australia*

WHEN I was in Norway last June, I couldn't tell west from east since the midnight sun set and then rose practically at the same place on the horizon. How could I have found out?

ANYWHERE in the northern hemisphere north of the Tropic of Cancer, on any day, the sun is (give or take a degree or two) due south at 12 noon, due west at 6pm and due north at 12 midnight, if one is using local time. So if the questioner had a watch he would have known which was north, as the sun would have to be in this direction to set and then rise simultaneously. — *Hillary J Shaw, London*

IS THERE more justice or injustice in the world?

SURELY the final words on this were spoken long ago:
The rain it raineth on the just
And also on the unjust fella:
But chiefly on the just, because
The unjust steals the just's umbrella.
— *Sandy Leask, Sydney, Australia*

Any answers?

WHAT is the geological explanation for the red rock stacks in Monument Valley, Arizona? — *Don Draper, Woodmancote, Cheltenham*

CAN someone explain the great range of hair and eye colour in people of European origin? — *Joyce Carr, St Leonards on Sea, East Sussex*

WHAT are the three greatest conspiracies of all time? — *Ms B Evans, Gaithersburg, Maryland, USA*

WHAT does *solum meha adular* mean, and in what language? It occurs, passim, in a recent poem in German by P Coryllis on atrocities throughout history. — *Dino Bressan, Melbourne, Australia*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/+44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ

A Country Diary

Jeremy Smith

NEW SOUTH WALES: It looked like beer. The brown, foam-topped water flowed over and around the large, sculpted granite boulders with impressive power and speed. Casuarina trees rooted in crevices well above the river's usual reach trembled as they leant with the surge. The level was still rising. Flotillas of sticks and logs picked from upstream banks hurried by. Water already covered most of the lichened rocks where I walk and scramble in normal, drier times, seeking lizards and peering into small stagnant pools. Now it was rising to comb the long grass beyond into straight tresses like a swimmer's hair. Truly, this is a land of extremes, and its inhabitants seem well adjusted to it. None of those small animals that I would have expected to have been evicted from their streamside homes were to be seen — all had apparently in some way anticipated the flood and made satisfactory alternative arrangements. The steady rain continued to fall vertically in the muggy air, and through it flicked a score of feeding tree martins unimpressed by the wetness. A kookaburra was coping less well and flew away heavily with sodden plumage. I wanted to see the waterfall in flood but it was inaccessible; the high flow having made an unreachable island of the small ridge from which a view would have been possible. A clear sighting of a rock wallaby bounding over the boulders beyond the impassable torrent made up for the disappointment.

Master collection

ART
Adrian Searle

THESE days £50,000 won't get you far as a serious art collector. But this was what Sir Denis Mahon paid to amass his collection of 17th century Italian Baroque paintings, now on show at London's National Gallery until May 18 and worth an estimated £25 million. He is about to donate his cache — the most important private collection of Italian Baroque paintings to be assembled this century — to museums and public collections in Britain, Ireland and Italy.

Now in his 80s, Mahon, the great-nephew of the founder of the Guinness Mahon merchant bank, is an art historian, collector and benefactor. From Irish aristocratic stock, Mahon sat at the feet of Kenneth Clark at the Ashmolean in Oxford, was taught by Nikolaus Pevsner at the Courtauld, argued Poussin with Anthony Blunt (and was proved right) and has fought over museum entry charges, arts funding cuts, inheritance taxes, and the rights of museums to flog off their acquisitions. Last month he withdrew his bequest to the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool when the gallery announced that it was about to introduce admission charges.

That the 76 paintings, and a great many drawings, by the likes of Guido Reni, Guercino, Annibale Carracci, Giordano and Domenichino should have fallen out of favour to such an extent that Mahon could afford to buy them in the first place is a story in itself. Ruskin rubbished the Italian Baroque in the 1840s, and well into our present century the National Gallery felt it could not convince its trustees to buy such paintings.

The Seicento is not altogether easy to respond to: too many bearded, balding old saints and curly-haired cherubs, stagey, operatic gestures; too many improbable visions; too much ornament. But Baroque, after all, means bizarre. Pier Francesco Mola's Saint Bruno levitates on a low-budget, pillowy cloud in a woodland clearing; Guercino's Elijah is fed by biblical ravens. But where *are* the ravens? Shouldn't the painting be titled Elijah Fed By Invisible Ravens, or Elijah Plays Spot The Raven? The birds are lost in gloom. Boss-eyed Giovanni Francesco Barbieri was known as Guercino because of his squint, and Gennari's portrait of the artist doesn't spare us the artist's affliction.

The longer one looks, the stranger some of the paintings become. Domenichino's Landscape With A Fortified Town, with its peculiar scale and weird anomalies, has a punting boatman contorted into an unbelievable posture as he navigates the shallows and bares his bum. The painting is a collection of spliced-together passages caught in an odd light, and figures acknowledging one another across an impossible space, but that precisely is the painting's pleasure and enigma.

An entire room is devoted to Giordano's Modelli, or worked-up oil sketches for his vast fresco ceiling for the Palazzo Medici Riccardi in Florence. They are extraordinary, with gallumphing, goonish ostriches, Disney lions and elephants woven into the mad dynamism of the compositions, the churning mythologies and allegories. The gods disport wildly across vast terrains in thunderous light. The entire room makes one feel quite unwell, and it is a relief to retreat to Guercino's wonderful drawings, picked up for a song and now donated by Mahon to the Ashmolean Museum.

Guercino was a fabulous draughtsman. The pen scratches and turns, slithers into arabesque as it negotiates drapery, describes a corpse, delineates a devil. Guercino had such a vocabulary of touches, nervous tremors and deft grace-notes that this room is a marvellous lesson in drawing. A landscape, with cliffs, the sea and a fortress on a hilltop, creates a floating world in which diminutive figures are dwarfed by the blank paper sky. It is a drawing to die for.



Reni's The Rape of Europa: In 1945, Denis Mahon found himself bidding for it against a man who was only interested in the frame

This extraordinary sense of scale is echoed in a small pair of landscapes by Salvator Rosa. The desolate, closely detailed wreckage of twisted branches, broken rocks, trees clinging at odd angles to the scarp, is given a sudden sense of enormity by Rosa's tiny figures.

Mahon has rescued not only paintings but reputations, and an epoch, from historical neglect and layers of darkened varnish — discovering Guercinos in attics, acquiring Old Master drawings for next to nothing, resuscitating languishing reputations from family vaults and salerooms. Bidding for Guido Reni's The Rape Of Europa in 1945, Mahon was competing with a picture framer more interested in the 18th century Régence frame than in the painting itself, once owned by the king of Poland.

But what a curious painting Reni's Europa is. Abducted by Zeus, who has taken the form of a bull, Europa is carried across the waves, though she is oblivious to her plight, and gazes wanly at a little cupid. She looks as though she's reclining on a sofa. The bull, supposedly wafting her through the sea, is almost utterly passive — a daft cow rather than a raging bull. It is difficult not to feel that the whole thing is preposterous: never mind the provenance, or that Reni was regarded so highly in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Ruskin complained that Italian Baroque painting lacked sincerity, but could such a painting have been committed to canvas without an excess of sincerity, the most overweening suspension of disbelief? And yet . . . The drawing may be floppy, Europa's arm may be bloated and out of its socket, the entire scene may be ludicrous to modern eyes, but the colour is fabulous: the pale yellow dress and pink cloak billowing against the dead grey of the sea, the knocked-down blue of the sky.

Reni's late, thinly-painted, pallid Cleopatra, caught doing the bad thing with the asp, is an interesting painting for other reasons. In this painting of cold clamminess, style and subject seem utterly at one. The colour drains from the picture as life expires from its subject: a good third of the painting is devoted to the pale, almost undifferentiated, sick-looking skin of Cleopatra's bosom.

But we must move on. The Baroque was weird, florid, ornamental, gaudy and silly, and it seems safe to say that the likes of Guido Reni, Annibale Carracci and Guercino will never be crowd-pullers to equal the Florentine and Venetian painters of the previous century — but Mahon's collection is both historically important and full of wondrous, flagrant, essential things. And Ruskin, anyhow, was mad.

Tom plays down to Jerry

CINEMA
Derek Malcolm

EVEN though it is the only Hollywood movie up for the Best Film Oscar, Jerry Maguire hardly seems the most likely candidate for that accolade. Nor does Tom Cruise, its star turn, seem a natural Best Actor winner.

He's good in this tale of a sports agent with attitude, and director Cameron Crowe has written the kind of sharp screenplay missing from most big movies of the past year. But if this is the best Hollywood can offer, you wonder what all the talent is doing.

Actually, we know. It's making technically brilliant but brain-dead movies. But Crowe's film, though equipped with an unconvincingly feelgood ending, and technically as proficient as any, isn't brain-dead. It presumes a modicum of intelligence in its audience and a clever mix of comedy, romance and drama pushes it towards real sophistication.

Jerry (Cruise) is an agent with a difference. He works for a top outfit that coddles dozens of major league sports stars. But he begins to hate the process and produces a document suggesting everyone would be happier if fewer clients were given more care. Jerry is given an ovation when he reaches the office next morning. Hand on heart, they all love him, especially the single mother (Renee Zellweger) who works in accounts and fancies him. Unfortunately, his bosses also have a view. Fewer clients mean less money, and he's sacked. He tries to keep his clients with him when he goes independent. Only two do — Cuba Gooding Jr's eccentric Arizona Cardinals football star and Jerry O'Connell's young hopeful. He's now alone and in deep shit. He weds the girl in accounts, but his love life is like his career — empty.

The film asks whether he will ever find himself and come out the other side of the biggest risk of his life. Somehow we know he will, but the blessing of the film is that you can't see how.

Cruise has never been a bad actor, yet it's difficult for so big a star to suggest so small a man. But he tries very hard.

The Oscar nomination, for Best Supporting Actor, seems the more convincing. Cuba Gooding Jr — as the scatty but good-hearted Cardinals man — is as much the star of the picture as anybody.

Principally, though, it is the screenplay that stands out. Even if Crowe's view of the sports scene, where money is, as everywhere, god, is vitiated by the pie-in-the-sky ending, Jerry Maguire has both sharpness and bite in its incidentals.

Outperforming the maestro

NEW RELEASE
Edward Greenfield

SO INSPIRED was Benjamin Britten as an interpreter of his own music, particularly on disc, that any modern rival has the hardest act to follow. Britten's own 33-year-old Decca recording of the comic opera, Albert Herring, has long seemed definitive, but here Steuart Bedford — whom Britten chose to follow him in conducting operas at Aldeburgh — presents a brilliant new recording.

Not just is it fuller and more immediate in sound than the Decca original, but it offers a performance which brings out the fun of the piece even more infectiously than Britten himself did. It consistently gives the illusion of a stage comedy, rather than of a studio recording.

This is the latest in the impressive Collins series of Britten recordings with Bedford conducting, and in many ways it is the finest yet. Bedford has long made a speciality of conducting this opera, a very English piece which yet has been among the most widely appreciated of Britten operas throughout the world. Bedford's practical experience makes it second nature for him to time humorous lines with delectable point.

So the passage at the end of the village fête scene, where the inebriated Albert as May King gets the hiccups, is far funnier here with Christopher Gillett in the title role than with Peter Pears, for whom the role was written. It helps that Gillett has a clear, youthful-sounding tenor, whereas Pears, recording in his mid-50s, 17 years after the first performance, inevitably sounds rather old for the role of the gawky hero.



Steuart Bedford conducting Albert Herring. NIGEL LUCKHURST

As Lady Billows, Josephine Barstow, with rasp in the voice, is every bit as formidable as Sylvia Fisher was before, and Felicity Palmer is wonderfully characterful as her prim housekeeper, Florence Pike. The other village worthies are also strongly cast, including Robert Lloyd's pompous Superintendent Budd, and Peter Savidge as the Vicar.

The lower orders in this class-ridden plot, Albert's Mum (Della Jones), the butcher's boy, Sid (Gerald Finley), and Nancy (Ann Taylor), are earthier and lustier than their predecessors, with Sid and Nancy's love duets tenderly touched in.

What seals the set's success is the way that in the ensembles — whether the fast chattering ones, or the great Threnody when they think that Albert is dead — Bedford secures such crisp playing. He lifts rhythms even more wittily than Britten, regularly making the music swagger.

Britten: Albert Herring
Gillett/Barstow/Palmer/Jones/Finley/Taylor/Gritton/Lloyd/Savidge
Northern Sinfonia/Bedford
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Sex, drugs and what now?

THEATRE
Michael Billington

YOU CAN call it several things. Social comedy. Comedy of manners. Comedy of recognition. But it is a staple part of drama: the play that reflects the way we live now. And April de Angelis's **The Positive Hour**, co-produced by Hampstead Theatre and Out of Joint, is a witty, beady-eyed example of the genre in that it pins down our current sexual, moral and intellectual confusion. How do we survive, it asks, in an age shorn of ideals?

De Angelis has a wickedly sharp eye for the screwed-up lives of the fortysomethings who emerged from the radicalised late sixties. Miranda, is a committed social worker whose own life has an ordered hollowness. Miranda's husband, Roger, is an academic unable to finish his book on Hegel and, for all his token feminism, driven to join a bullish men's group. And her best friend, Emma, is a failed painter now going into the greetings-card business while getting her kicks out of sado-masochism.

Roger approvingly quotes Hegel's doctrine that "history is the progress of reason in the world". But de Angelis persuasively suggests that we have reached a crisis point: that, lacking faith in reason, God or even right-on sixties politics, we have nothing left to steer by. If she sees any hope, it is in our gut survival instinct. Her two most positive characters are Paula, a working-class single mum who'll do anything to retrieve her foster-parented daughter, and Nicola, a budding student seeking to escape her lunatically possessive dad.

But de Angelis writes with a surprisingly light touch about the modern moral maze. The S&M games, in particular, are executed with a desperate politesse ("Tell me, am I invading your privacy?" inquires a man in a rubberised mask). She writes with acute intelligence about a world of privileged desperation.

Max Stafford-Clark directs with his usual self-effacing regard for text, and the characters obviously understand their characters. Julia Lane plays the daughter-hunting Paula with a no-nonsense pragmatism that, de Angelis implies, may be the best answer to our current profound moral confusion.

Steven Pimlott's beautiful revival of Tennessee Williams's **Camino Real** at the Swan in Stratford-upon-Avon is a major act of restoration. A play derided by the American critics in 1953 and scarcely known in Britain turns out to be a highly affecting meditation on time, age, death, loneliness and the transcendent power of dreams — all the great Tennessee Williams themes.

Far from being obscure, the play is disarmingly direct. What makes it unusual is the form — it is constructed in 16 "blocks" — and the subordination of narrative to mood.

The action takes place in a tropical port where luxury and poverty collide. Into a town populated by hustlers, conmen and stranded romantics living in a state of arrested time, Williams pitches Kilroy, an innocent American and boxing champ. Though he represents the spirit of youth and energy, Kilroy is instinctively drawn to the town's damaged idealists; the play's dynamic is the question of whether he will escape with his dreams intact.

Williams first sketched out the play shortly after writing A Streetcar Named Desire, and its theme is almost identical: the trials of the poetic spirit in a corrupt world. The difference is that Williams here allows himself a measure of optimism. Byron, with whom Williams passionately identifies, announces before departing that the poet's true vocation is "to influence the heart". It is, in the end, an affirmative work.

Romantic? Certainly. Over-written? Possibly. Yet it is hard not to respond to Williams's overwhelming love for society's victims and outcasts: there's a great moment when the town's hotelier, rebuked by an aristocrat for housing so many undesirables, responds that they have paid the same price as him — "desperation". But the play also confirms my long-held view that Williams, under his flushed romanticism, is an essentially comic writer: there is mirth as well as melancholy in this town where Esmeralda, the local gypsy's daughter, finds her virginity restored by the moon and where Baron de Charlus goes cruising outside a hotel called the Ritz Men Only.

Camino Real emerges as Williams's great "lost" play and this is a spectacularly good production that has the right air of decayed fiesta. The acting is also first-rate. Darrell D'Silva's Kilroy has exactly the right buoyant innocence and Susannah York's Marguerite is both dreamily sensual and filled with an iron determination to escape.

The play's the thing

IT COULD be billed as "an artist's revenge", *writes Dan Glaister.* Actors and directors who have suffered the indignity of a bad review will be able to get their own back next month when four theatre critics direct a season of plays at BAC in south London.

The Guardian's Michael Billington, Nicholas de Jongh of the London Evening Standard, Jeremy Kingston of the Times and the freelance critic James Christopher will each direct for the three-week season.

The season comes four months after the theatre director Michael Bogdanov published a withering attack on an unnamed critic, whom he dismissed as a "vicious, vituperative, vitriolic, objectionable, abusive, arrogant, excretory, disgruntled, cavilling, small-minded, arse-licking, toadying sycophant". He suggested all critics would benefit from a greater understanding of the process that leads to a production. The season at BAC may help to bring critics and artists closer.



The usual suspects . . . Nicholas de Jongh, Jeremy Kingston, the Guardian's Michael Billington and James Christopher are to direct plays rather than criticise them in a short season at the BAC

Passion of a power player

CLASSICAL MUSIC
Alan Rusbridger

FROM the moment the gangling boyish figure runs onto the platform and strides determinedly toward the instrument you already sense this pianist is different. His arms look as if they were added as an afterthought, dangling awkwardly at his side. His hair looks as if several thousand volts have recently passed through it.

But then he begins to play and the electricity passes to his fingers. It is difficult to conceive how mere muscle, nerve and synapse can be willed into such feats. It feels like a force of nature. The first exposure to the full blast of Chopin is like stepping out into an elemental storm. It takes you a while to get your bearings.

He is still only 25, yet already a London appearance by Evgeny Kissin is a five-star, season ticket-only event in the British musical calendar. He is recklessly spoken of in the same breath as Horowitz, Richter and Gilels. He certainly has the technique, the clarity and the passion of Horowitz, if not yet the range. But then he does have a few years to go yet.

In the first half he played the familiar territory of the Four Ballades of Chopin. But there was barely a phrase in them that did not sound in some way unfamiliar. The same was just as true of the second-half Schumann — his Kreisleriana and Opus 7 Toccata.

Kissin has a sense of harmonic architecture, so that he can never begin a phrase without knowing where it will end. He has a complete understanding of a piece's counterpoint. The tension lies in being aware of each line, while at the same time allowing each melody and internal answer its independence. There can have been few in the audience who didn't hear something new in each Ballade: phrases and harmonies that had escaped them before, chords they had not noticed.

Then again, he has an astonishing dynamic range. The quiet passages are very, very quiet. He moves to loud as though leaning on an organ swell pedal. And then he moves beyond loud.

The torrent of notes towards the end of the last Ballade was impressive enough in its sheer pyrotechnical deluge. More magical still were the four chords that intervene before the final, unleashed fury. Kissin played each with equal weight and calmness. On the last he physically coiled like a cat about to pounce. And when he did pounce it was with a spring violence that was startling.

The fear is that Kissin, like Cherkassky, becomes marooned in a relatively narrow repertoire in which the formidable technique will always astonish but never quite deepen. The thrill is the anticipation that, in time, that ability and intelligence will progress to late Beethoven, Schubert and Mozart. If so, then we have a lifetime of greatness ahead of us.

Meanwhile back at the farm

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

THE SPONGE of the soul can only absorb two soaps. If you watch three, the surplus emotion sploshes around and makes your socks wet. So I only catch **Emmerdale** (ITV) now and then, and, when I do, something ghastly seems to be happening. Nothing remains of the everyday story of Emmerdale Farm but those little lambs bounding in the opening titles. Emmerdale now is a sort of Wuthering Oops!

The last time I dropped in, Dave Glover had burned to a crisp, saving his baby son from a blazing house. Dave, a lanky stable lad, had been having an affair with Kim Tate, the squire's lady. The squire put his wife under house arrest and bought their baby for a million pounds. (Look, it's nothing to do with me. I just sit here.) Emmerdale's panting publicity calls Kim the Bitch of Emmerdale. I don't know. She seemed a nice enough woman to me, particularly in jodhpurs.

Last week Kim's car and decomposing body ("It's not going to be a pretty sight!") was dragged out of Frank's flooded quarry. I am never very happy about decomposing bodies. Well, vultures apart, who is? They always turn out in the end to be someone you've never heard of called Muriel. Frank, seizing opportunity firmly by the forelock, sobbed inconsolably into his baby. Fortunately, an unusually placid child.

"She can't be dead! She can't be! She doesn't deserve this! I loved Kim! I hurt her and she hurt me, but we were made for each other. Why, why did she have to die?" As Frank and Kim made Punch and Judy look chummy, this threnody was thought excessive by some. To wit the police, who will shortly feel Frank's collar.

Any listings magazine will confirm that next week "Frank faces the wrath of the courts". The wrath of the courts. Even lawyers are livelier when soaped.

Shirley Valentine is always invoked when Jan Ruston's story is told. Jan went to Cyprus, Aphrodite's island, and fell in love with Paul Georgiou, a fisherman. "This was a woman of 42 and suddenly she's 16 again. It was wonderful for her," said Sharon, her cousin.

Sharon and Jan are Essex girls. They grew up together and thought they would grow old together. In **A Deadly Secret** (BBC1) Sharon said, "I always thought Jan and I would be two old girls, tottering up the High Street towards Debenhams. Always a dream that one day we would still be together — and it won't happen now." She leaned over Jan's bed with a snap of two skinny children. "Happy days, weren't they, Jan?" The woman in the bed looked like an unburied corpse. Paul did not tell her he was HIV-positive, and now she is dying of Aids.

Family feeling is so tight you can twang it. Jan's family is fighting to make the reckless transmission of Aids illegal. This is uncharted territory. Jan's mother and father share her care devotedly. her mother ruffles her last wisp of hair so it stands up like a cock's comb. Her father rubs his forehead as if thought hurt. "It's so devastating. I get upset when I think of it. I'd give my all for her. If I could swap with her, I would willingly."

Taken for a ride

Linda Colley

Colonization: A Global History
by Marc Ferro
Routledge 416pp £55 hdbk · £16.99 pback

SURELY we all know what colonisation means? Isn't it summed up nicely on the cover of this book, a reproduction of Thomas Jones Barker's gorgeous depiction of Queen Victoria bestowing a Bible on an African, or possibly an Indian, prince? Here is the great white mother imposing her culture on a kneeling black, whose individuality is in turn erased by the artist's own flamboyant orientalism.

Yet the closer you look, the more these certainties seem to blur. Supposedly subordinate, it is in fact the African/Indian who commands this picture, his perfect physique and evident animation reducing the Queen's courtiers to pallid, overbred marginals. And Victoria herself scarcely exudes confident dominion. Prevented by the conventions of her sex from posing here as conqueror or overlord, she might rather be returning an overdue library book and glumly calculating the fine.

This may seem only an application of post-colonial cynicism to what was at the time an unambiguous celebration of the civilising virtues of empire. Except that, as Mark Ferro's ambitious, difficult but rewarding volume makes quite clear, there was never a period in the past when a consensus existed about either the merits or demerits of colonisation.

And what is colonisation anyway? "The occupation of a foreign land," says Ferro here. This sounds straightforward but in practice it is anything but. Like treason, colonisation is a name normally applied only to ventures that have failed. When colonisation succeeds, however, it is usually made respectable by being redescribed as nation-building. Thus, this book makes little mention of the colonisation practised by the United States. Why? Because America still retains the Indian and Mexican lands it occupied by force and guile in the 19th century, just as China got away with occupying Tibet, or medieval England got away with occupying Wales. In this sense, the US, China and the UK today are all colonial empires masquerading as nation states.

Up to a point, Ferro acknowledges this complexity and tries hard to define his topic broadly. Unlike many writers, he does not commit the historical error of assuming that only the western European maritime empires make up the story of colonisation. Japan's encounter with empire did not begin, as is often supposed, in the 16th century when the Portuguese missions first arrived there. Japan rather forged its own imperialism, in the sense of occupying neighbouring islands, from the 13th century.

By the same token, Japan's capacity for racial stereotyping as a prelude to and legitimation of conquest proved quite as enduring and unimaginative as that indulged in by any of the Western powers. "The Malays are lazy," declared an official Japanese report in the early 1940s; the Filipinos "have no real civilisation". For the East, as for the West, natives were often a shiftless lot.

Ferro also makes clear that the black legend of unvarying European imperial iniquity can be as historically misleading as the now discredited roseate legend of Europe bringing civilisation and modernity to lesser races. And he knows that greed and cruelty are not monopolies of whites. Slavery



A tiger hunt in India in 1911. Here as elsewhere, the British met a society as rich as or richer than their own PHOTOGRAPH: HULTON GETTY

was part of Arab and African society long before (and long after) the horrors of the transatlantic slave trade in the late 17th and 18th centuries.

This, then, is a book which strives for balance as well as global range. It canters across a tremendous amount of material, changing direction and chronology with each chapter. It is an ambitious and suggestive book which, if persevered with, will make its readers think: not least about the vulnerability of many of those engaged in the imperial enterprise. We are still all too inclined to see empire through the distorting lens of a 19th century stereotype, white Europeans possessed of the Gatling gun effortlessly mowing down black and brown people armed only with spears.

But such a massive technological gulf between coloniser and colonised was only occasionally the norm before the Industrial Revolution; and by no means invariably the case even after. Cortez might have terrified the Aztecs in pitched battles using horses and short swords. But the conquistadors, and their successors, were always at risk because of their small numbers, liability to disease, and massive ignorance of the countries in which they fought. Moreover, as in India, Europeans often came across societies as rich or richer than their own, and quite as capable as they of purchasing the latest weaponry.

Only in the 19th century did the gulf between a mechanised, unprecedented, affluent West and the exploited "other" begin to gape dramatically. Only then were the European empires able to rush in and standardise, compelling the different continents into a global economy on their terms. And after a fashion, this aspect of their work endured. As Ferro points out, the successors to the old maritime empires, today's new imperialists, are the great multinational companies. We are all colonials now.

Thrillers

Chris Petit

The World at Night, by Alan Furst (HarperCollins, £16.99)

THIS subtle, wartime thriller/love story set in occupied France works rather wonderfully as a *billet doux* to Paris and atmospheric evocation, with Furst more taken by casual entrapment over a leisurely lunch than high-speed chase. Furst produces unmanufactured suspense from making his characters walk the thinnest of lines between loyalty and betrayal. Eric Ambler is the story's obvious godfather.

The Crooked Man, by Philip Davidson (Jonathan Cape, £9.99)

TOUTED by its publisher as a "literary thriller". Roughly translated it means more quirk and detail than drive, ie, you leave with a more believable impression of seedy bachelor habits in the dead zone of rainy London suburbia than MI5's disposal of a dead Islington mistress the Cabinet minister skewered with a steak knife.

Undone, by Michael Kimball (Headline, £16.99)

LIKE Sister Assumpta in the Lent episode of Father Ted, Noel has a bad craving for chocolate, but being a Jim Thompson type of woman what she does with it Sr Assumpta wouldn't even dream of. Undone kicks off terrifically in high gear with Noel's husband getting himself buried alive so they can pocket the insurance money. But the knocking claustrophobia of the coffin scenes proves hard to top, and, having buried itself so effectively, the story never quite recovers.

Final Victim, by Stephen J Cannell (Michael Joseph, £9.99)

AS YOU'D expect from someone who has created more than 35 TV shows, including the A-Team, this is slick, broad, entertaining stuff — without bothering to hide the fact it has been assembled like a shopping list. Thus, (1) sexy subject — serial killer in cyberspace; (2) technoliterate story; (3) psycho who comes in several mutations; (4) sexy odd couple who strike TV show-type sparks; (5) screenplay speak that's both effortlessly cartoonish and overworked; "you wanna little advice, honey? Give this Loony Toons the gate, 'cause when I get through with him, there won't be enough left to scrape up an' flush"; (6) a product that's less a book than a bargaining tool (screen rights sold).

Manhattan Nocturne, by Colin Harrison (Bloomsbury, £15.99)

THE PLOT is a would-be Hitchcock for the nineties: guy tangles with femme fatale, gets in over his head. Rich, mysterious Caroline flags a hokey plot involving missing tapes belonging to a dead film brat. The book hits trouble when the sex scenes with the wife turn out bouncier than those with Caroline.

Bigger and baggier than life itself

Natasha Walter

Human Croquet
by Kate Atkinson
Doubleday 349pp £15.99

KATE ATKINSON is that rare thing, a writer who starts off her writing career with absolute certainty, hearing her own music and singing her own songs. This is only her second novel, her follow-up to Behind The Scenes At The Museum, which won the Whitbread Prize last year and then didn't stop selling. And it repeats the strengths of that first novel. Particularly, it shows off her ability to shine a light on the dusty secrets of the suburban family. She's the Mike Leigh of novel-writing, with a dash more mystery and depth.

The heroine of this novel, Isobel Fairfax, epitomises the book's confidence. She is a big, ugly girl of 16, who knows she can tell a story: "I am the alpha and omega of narrators," she tells us modestly. She revels in her own body: "I'm as large as England. My hands are as big as the Lakes, my belly the size of Dartmoor and my breasts rise up like the Peaks. My hair flows into the Humber estuary and causes it to flood and my nose is a white cliff at Dover. I'm a big girl, in other words."

It doesn't really help to compare Atkinson with other writers, but these quotations alert you to one of the reasons behind her great popularity. At a time when most new or newish female writers in Britain seem to be scaling down their ambitions, Atkinson reminds us that women can write noisy, attention-grabbing novels.

The most interesting thing that Atkinson does is to take that artistic no man's land, British suburbia, and pour into it all the love and despair, madness and desire, that you usually see associated with other landscapes — hot South American villages, perhaps, or wild Yorkshire moors. She creates a suburbia crossed with Wuthering Heights, and it's a great new location. Everything here is a bit bigger and louder than you expect: the greenfly are "locusts", the cake "bubbles monstrously" in the oven, marmalade is the colour of "melted lions", draughts are "major weather fronts".

Isobel sees the bats fly and hears the wolves howl. She is surrounded by the sad, magical scent of her dead mother. And she even plunges backwards through time, suddenly finding herself in a field in 1918, or entering an Elizabethan inn, or picking up a leaf in a primeval forest when she should be getting on the school bus. I love this crossing of genres, the surprise of finding yourself pushed from Coronation Street to the Faerie Queene. In this big, baggy novel, Atkinson confidently fuses everyday life and fantasy.

Alongside the surrealism of suburbia, Atkinson also captures its realism. She records the eccentricity of the suburban milieu with formidable verve. Isobel and her brother, Charles, are brought up by their aunt Vinny after their father and mother disappear. The very British madness Atkinson reveals in their home life will be familiar to readers of Behind The Scenes; the shouts and murmurs of families going slowly crazy in their dinky houses.

Atkinson's keen eye for the darkness of family life is buoyed up by her ability to describe physical detail. Isobel and Charles find that their mother's memory is kept alive by certain little objects that turn up out of the blue — a squashed shoe here, an old powder compact there. Those objects are described with an almost alarming power. "A high-heeled brown suede shoe with a strange piece of matted fur stuck to it, like a piece of dead cat. The inside of the shoe's spotted with mould and a rhinestone glistens from within the little nest of dead fur. The smell of sadness . . . is suddenly overwhelming."

Kate Atkinson doesn't compromise. She gives feminine experience the grandeur and scope that masculine experience more traditionally has. She shows us the drama embedded in the domestic. She tells us the secrets of women; that they abandon their children and take lovers, that they are raped and beaten, that they are disappointed and that they desire.

Atkinson's easy movements backwards and forwards through time, and her final retelling of the same day three times over, with three very different consequences — a literary Groundhog Day — give us a narrative that is both experimental and very readable. More, its cyclical structure says something about the lives of her heroines. She suggests that women's experiences are moulded by a constant struggle with men, and that this struggle echoes down the years. Isobel's story is bound up with that of her mother, a woman who is killed in the woods for her sexual daring, and their stories are bound up with that of an Elizabethan ancestress, who ran away into the woods to escape from her husband many centuries ago.

With just two novels, Atkinson has added new colour to the British literary landscape. Where she stumbles is in the carelessness of her prose. Flashes of wit and poetry are obscured by a monotonous narrative style. Too much of this book reads as if it's been slapped on to the page; the brush-strokes are too broad, the rhythms of the prose sag loosely. Sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, its slapdash style grates on the ear. But maybe Atkinson couldn't write any other way; maybe if she tightened her language all her noisy, colourful confidence would disappear. And that, it's true, would be a loss.

This book is available at the special discount price of £11.99 from Books @ The Guardian Weekly.

Knife and times

Stephen Tumim

Autobiography of a Murderer
by Hugh Collins
Macmillan 201pp £15.99

HOW different, how very different from the home life of our own dear Queen! So commented a member of the audience when Sarah Bernhardt, as Cleopatra, raving at the death of Antony and smashing the scenery, flopped on to the stage in a heap. Hugh Collins's account of his life in Autobiography Of A Murderer revives memory of the comment.

His childhood suffices to explain the rest. In about 1960 the children of the family find themselves alone in a room with Grandad. "He is in a coffin. We poke his face and the skin is cold and tough like a football. Someone finds some lipstick. What would Grandad look like with red lips? Alex is giggling as I rub great blobs of the stuff across Grandad's face. He's like Coco the Clown, I say, and everyone laughs uncontrollably."

"At the funeral I see my Da . . . I've seen him before. He's different now. He doesn't acknowledge me, his only son . . . He's dressed in black, a long immaculate black overcoat, a black suit, shining black shoes, a black tie and steel handcuffs."

There seems no way out for Mr Collins. After childhood comes Glasgow gangland, then murder and many years in prison, including a period in the famous Special Unit at Barlinnie, where prisoners were treated with remarkable humanity, and values were handed out by Jimmy Boyle. When Boyle left, Mr Collins felt the loss, although he inherited the relics, "stone-carving tools, old tenement blocks and a small tattered jungle hat".

In and out of prison the prevailing mood throughout is one of fear and violence. "The razor opens his jaw, blood spatters my jeans. Johnny and I just walk away, 'Fancy a pint up Byres Road?' . . ."

"I have never taken part in a fight without the dread of being slashed or stabbed, of dying or being sent to prison . . . The fear of losing face was even stronger — this fear of being exposed as a coward was what drove me. The physical actuality of the violence was a relief: I felt the pleasure of its release, a pure sensation."

The order of feelings is always the same: first fear, then violence. Mr Collins describes the murder for which he received his life sentence. His girlfriend carried the knife for him "in case the coppers pulled me on the way". It is an entirely unnecessary killing. In the acknowledgments to the book he refers to his victim: "William Murray, I would rather he were alive today than the existence of this book."

The sentiment is the nearest Mr Collins comes to remorse. It is also the nearest he comes to illiteracy. I do not know what help he has had with the book, but the result is a factual account, in no way mawkish, and at times — particularly in his description of his heroin bouts — both moving and precise.

Villainy of the grossest kind is not limited to the activities of Mr Collins. A fellow prisoner talks to him in the Special Unit: "Well, I'd stolen a TV set, and the coppers come up to turn me o'er. When they opened the back tae check the serial number, they found an arm inside, holdin' some intestines. One daft copper fainted, but they found the rest of the body in cupboards and drawers."

How it can be argued that there is no connection between crime and the environment, between violence and childhood poverty, I do not know. In Mr Collins's story each move in his progress appears inevitably to follow what went before, in the manner of classic drama.

When the book ends it is not so clear what is to happen next. He is now married and lives away from Glasgow. The true issue of the book is whether, if you are reared in fear which only violence can apparently relieve, it is possible to be habilitated.

His Honour Sir Stephen Tumim is Principal of St Edmund Hall, Oxford and was formerly HM Chief Inspector of Prisons



Better on two wheels than four . . . The Tour de France in 1995 PHOTOGRAPH: PHIL COLE

History goes in cycles

Matt Seaton

The Bicycle
by Pryor Dodge
Flammarion 224pp £35

HOW courageous the pioneers of cycling must have been. Or were they foolhardy, those magnificent men and women who struggled to adapt their sinews and their sense of balance to the business of riding the first effective human-powered vehicle in history? How many croppers and imperial crowners (as the contemporary cycling vernacular had it) did they endure on their hobby-horses and high-wheelers? This book can tell you the answer, and much else besides.

The bicycle now seems such a humdrum, workaday piece of technology that it has lost much of its aura of wonder and strangeness. In fact, for many, cycling is a thing of childhood, something to be put aside as adulthood arrives. Those of us who keep the habit, or acquire it late, are made to feel faintly infantile in ordinary society. It is this feeling of inferiority, imposed on cyclists by the supposedly universal appeal of motoring, which makes a book on cycling like Pryor Dodge's such a reassuring read.

Pryor Dodge — and what a wonderful, and wonderfully appropriate, moniker that is! — has combined what is unquestionably the most finely illustrated history of cycling ever produced with a text which is both erudite and elegant.

He relates how a small army of amateur inventors and self-taught engineers was fired by the desire to build the first human-powered machine of transportation. Dodge shows how the evolution of the bicycle was essentially the story of 19th century industrialism: tubular frames, ball bearings, wire-tension wheels, the pneumatic tyre, not to mention the miraculously efficient mechanism of the chain drive, were all developed for the bicycle.

It is a story very reminiscent of the pioneers of powered flight, and indeed cycling has always been a close metaphorical cousin of flying: early racing cyclists were often called "flyers". And before that historic flight at Kitty Hawk, Orville and Wilbur Wright had been bike mechanics in Dayton, Ohio.

But where Pryor Dodge is superlative is on the bicycle's intersection with society, politics and the arts. He has uncovered some new gems, such as Mark Twain's account of learning to ride a penny-farthing: "A boy . . . perched on a gate-post munching a hunk of maple sugar . . . was full of interest and comment. The first time I failed and went down he said that if he was me he would dress up in pillows, that's what he would do. The next time I went down he advised me to go and learn to ride a tricycle first. The third time I collapsed he said he didn't believe I could stay on a horse-car."

Twain was writing in the mid-1880s. Before the century was out, the United States had a world champion in the figure of "Major" Taylor, who was not only the finest sprint cyclist of his day, but also the first African-American to hold a world record in any sport.

Dodge brings the story of cycling up to date with an account of the development of the mountain bike, which has been probably the most significant breakthrough in bicycle design this century and has certainly relaunched cycling as, once again, a glamorous and groovy recreation.

Pryor Dodge not only reminds us of history; he points a way forward by documenting the bicycle renaissance of recent years. Like Mark Twain, we must persevere and plough on — the scoffers can go to hell by any means they please.

Journey back to Eden

Gillian Beer

Bright Paradise: Victorian Scientific Travellers
by Peter Raby
Chatto and Windus 276pp £20

BRIGHT paradise: gleaming bogs: what did Victorian scientists seek and what did they find on their journeys? The bright paradise was as often a place of swamp, smoke, dysentry, snakes as it was of orchids, air and abundance. Peter Raby's account brings together the books, journals and letters of the many workers who set out in search of the unforeseen. That they found in abundance, in risky encounters with indigenous peoples to whom the master-servant relation and the work ethic were unfamiliar and unwelcome.

They found it too in novel plants and animals, birds and insects, whom they collected, killed and categorised. Yet some of them also found unforeseen friendship across cultural bounds and ecstatic pleasure in observing bog and tropical forest. Linnaeus, establishing a new system of taxonomy, had called himself "the second Adam", naming all things. The brightness of this paradise is the brilliance of naming, the hoped-for discovery of a new intellectual order.

The long voyage was a rite of passage for young Victorian scientists: Huxley, Hooker, Darwin among them. At the age of present-day graduate students they set out from England into difference. Difference was their professional study, categorising diversity their professional goal.

The enchanting profusion of natural forms was eventually to be regularised: but the profusion itself was the lure. Plants, peoples, birds, animals proved to be more diverse than the language of the species-impoverished British Isles could conceive. For the most imaginative of them, such as Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, the experience first shook up, then undermined, the static taxonomies with which they had set out.

Alfred Russel Wallace emerges as one of the most attractive figures in this wide-ranging study, as he has a way of doing wherever he appears. His stay among the forest Indians focused his life-long socialism, as he saw that in Britain there were "confined in our dense towns/And scattered over our most fertile fields,/ Millions of men who live a lower life". The lines come from a long poem he wrote in 1851 to occupy the hours of the rainy season when he could not be collecting. Still, he contrived in six weeks to collect 40 species of butterfly "quite new to him".

Wallace is now best known as the thinker who, besides Darwin, reached the concept of "natural selection" in the late-1850s. It is not quite accurate to state, as Peter Raby does, that he formulated it "quite independently of Darwin". Wallace took with him Darwin's The Voyage Of The Beagle; there many of the themes were mooted that, to a serious and open-minded thinker, led straight to the Origin, though Darwin himself held back until he had collected the necessary spectrum of evidences.

The pleasure of this study is in the extraordinary array of lesser-known figures whose writing Raby has read and which he skilfully paraphrases as well as quoting extensively. Spruce, Barth, Lander and Waterton prove, in this version, as interesting as more notorious explorers such as Du Chaillu, whose encounters with gorillas were the subject of much scientific scepticism at the time.

Among all the rapine of such collection (Du Chaillu shot, stuffed and brought home more than 2,000 birds and 200 quadrupeds), the figure of Marianne North is a relief. "Marianne North was one of the first collectors to record, rather than collect." Armed with painting materials she travelled the world, dwelling particularly in Central America, Borneo and the Indian subcontinent.

Raby is also a sympathetic collector of the unexpected. He is generous, rather than probing and brings to light fascinating material, and even some new species of traveller.

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Motor Racing Australian Grand Prix

Coulthard fires the McLaren revival

Richard Williams in Melbourne



Early exit . . . Herbert and Villeneuve crash out on the first corner PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE COOPER

THE McLaren-Mercedes team's long and painful period of failure came to an end here, with a win for David Coulthard in Sunday's Australian Grand Prix.

Coulthard's victory at the Albert Park circuit came exactly 50 races after McLaren's last success, which also marked Ayrton Senna's final appearance in their colours. But as the 25-year-old Scot swept to his second grand prix win, followed home in third place by Mika Hakkinen in the other McLaren, the gods of misfortune seemed to have moved further up the pit lane.

The Williams-Renaults of Jacques Villeneuve and Heinz-Harald Frentzen, clear favourites to maintain the form that brought them the drivers' and constructors' titles last season, suffered disaster at opposite ends of a race they were expected to dominate, leaving Michael Schumacher's Ferrari to mount the only serious challenge to the McLarens. The double world champion finished between the two silver cars, prevented by an emergency late refuelling stop from sustaining a final challenge to Coulthard, who had responded with impressive calm to the sight of such a formidable foe in his mirrors.

Villeneuve disappeared in the opening seconds, the victim of an accident caused by the rashness of Schumacher's team-mate Eddie Irvine. That opened the way for Frentzen, who led the opening laps of the race with ease before making the first of his two pit stops. But, when a botched second stop forced him to press hard to catch Coulthard, a front brake gave way and spun him into a gravel trap with three laps to go.

But their disappointment was as nothing compared with that of Damon Hill, last seen winning the 1996 world championship in a Williams. On Saturday his efforts to qualify the troublesome Arrows-Yamaha in his first race for the team had been nothing short of heroic. In terms of sheer guts 20th place on the 22-car grid in the Arrows represented a feat as remarkable as any of his pole positions with the all-conquering Williams.

"If we get the car to the finish," he said on Sunday morning, "it'll be quite an achievement." To the distress of his admirers, he did not get it to the start. He had barely begun the parade lap when he lost the use of his electronic throttle control. As the engine died, he pulled silently off the track and then climbed out to help the marshals move the car out of the way before the race came by.

Hill's departure had no effect on the shape of the contest, which was largely determined by Irvine's erratic judgment. Villeneuve, whose speed in practice had seriously undermined the new-season optimism of his rivals, slipped his clutch on the start line and got away badly from pole position, but not badly enough to deserve what happened next. As Frentzen made a better start from the other front-row position and zipped past him on the left, with Johnny Herbert's Ferrari engined Sauber in pursuit, Irvine came up on the inside as they approached the first corner, a right-hander.

Braking impossibly late on a slippery part of the track off the normal racing line, the Ferrari went past Coulthard's McLaren but then slid into Villeneuve's Williams, which was turning into the corner. Villeneuve hit Herbert, who had thrust his Sauber's nose around the outside of the Williams but was not far enough ahead to avoid the impact. All three cars were out.

Gerhard Berger's lacklustre fourth place was poor consolation for the Benetton team, who were distinctly unimpressed as they watched Jean Alesi, their other driver, coast to a halt with a dry petrol tank on the 35th lap.

For Alain Prost, Olivier Panis's fifth place and a seventh for the Japanese debutant Shinji Nakano in the renamed Ligier-Hondas represented a solid if unspectacular start to his ownership.

For Hill, a long and hard season beckons. If he thought the past four years were character-building, the prospect of 16 more races like this one will test his resilience to the utmost. On the other hand, even the smallest improvement will feel like a victory. If he and the team have hauled the car up to the middle of the field and are finishing races by the time they get to Silverstone in July, they will deserve a championship trophy of their own.

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Mixed fortunes in Europe

OF the three English football clubs involved in European competitions last week, one recorded a victory which brought back memories of English soccer's pre-Heysel glory days, another ended on the losing side, while the third drew.

Manchester United gave a performance of sheer majesty to crush Portuguese champions FC Porto 4-0 in the first leg of the European Cup quarter-final at Old Trafford. David May, Eric Cantona and Ryan Giggs all scored a goal each in the first hour, and Andy Cole got the team's fourth late in the game, making it virtually certain that, barring a catastrophic night in the return leg at the Das Antas Stadium later this month, England will be represented in the semi-final of Europe's premier club competition for the first time in a dozen seasons.

Newcastle United, on the other hand, face an uphill struggle to reach the semi-final of the Uefa Cup after going down to Monaco at St James' Park.

With their strike force of Alan Shearer, Les Ferdinand, Peter Beardsley and Faustino Asprilla unable to take the field because of injury, Kenny Dalglish was forced to field a depleted side. Although there were plenty of heroics in the first-leg thriller, Newcastle could not hold off their impressive opponents.

The Magpies' tormentor-in-chief was Brazilian ace Sonny Anderson, who grabbed the only goal of the match, pouncing in the 59th minute. The result could have been worse for the home side but for some excellent saves from goalkeeper Shaka Hislop.

In the Cup Winners' Cup quarter-final, first leg, Liverpool returned home from Norway with an away-goal advantage after drawing 1-1 with Brann Bergen. Robbie Fowler put Liverpool ahead after 10 minutes but Geir Hasund pulled one back two minutes into the second half.

In Scotland, Celtic claimed their first win in this season's Old Firm matches when they knocked arch-rivals Rangers out of the Scottish Cup in the fifth round to book a place in the semi-final. Rangers were always up against it after Malky Mackay headed Celtic into a 10th minute lead from a corner. Paolo Di Canio doubled the advantage from a penalty eight minutes later. Celtic had two other claims rejected. Brian Laudrup had an early chance smothered by Stewart Kerr who also tipped over a late Alan Moore header.

FOOTBALLERS Bruce Grobbelaar, John Fashanu and Hans Segers along with Malayasian businessman Heng Suan Lim are to be retried on corruption charges. The decision by the Crown Prosecution Service to go ahead with a second trial follows the end of the first case when the jury at Winchester Crown Court failed to reach a verdict. The four deny conspiring to give and take corrupt payments to influence the outcome of soccer matches.

AUSTRALIA'S cricketers beat South Africa by an innings and 196 runs in the opening Test of their tour at Johannesburg. The home side were dismissed for 302 in the first innings and the tourists replied with 628 for 8 declared, Greg Blewett (214) and Steve Waugh (160) failing by just 20 runs to break the all-time Test record of 405 for the fifth wicket, set in 1946-47 by Bradman and Barnes against England in Sydney. Michael Bevan and Shane Warne claimed four wickets each as South Africa were dismissed for 130 in the second innings

Yorkshire meanwhile have signed Michael Slater as a replacement for Bevan as their overseas player for next season. The 27-year-old New South Wales batsman was a regular in the Australian Test side until the recent series against West Indies. Bevan is almost certain to be in his country's side for the Ashes series. Kent have appointed former New Zealand captain John Wright as their new coach.

CENTRAL Park, home of Wigan Rugby League Club since 1902 and scene of some of the finest battles in the club's long and distinguished history, has been sold for more than £12 million to a supermarket chain. The move has left many of Wigan's life-long supporters bitter and angry.

Over the Pennines, members of Yorkshire Cricket Club have voted three to one in favour of leaving Headingley, Leeds, for a greenfield site near Wakefield where the first purpose-built Test ground this century is planned. The club has 84 years of a 99-year lease remaining at Headingley and the planned move faces stiff opposition from several quarters.

Rugby League Silk Cut Challenge Cup

Bulls corner the market

Paul Fitzpatrick

SO MANY Bradford fans travelled the down the M62 to Oldham for this quarter-final that a near-full Boundary Park must have felt just like home.

The Bulls need little encouragement these days and in this atmosphere they could scarcely fail, defeating Oldham Bears 38-12. This tie was effectively settled in a blistering opening spell.

Paul Loughlin got the first of the Bulls' six tries in the third minute and it was six minutes before the Bears escaped from their 30-metre zone.

The Bradford coach Matthew Elliott was not entirely satisfied with his side's efforts, but the Bulls are only one step away from a second successive appearance at Wembley and he did not, he said, want to be over-critical.

Bradford were practically home by half-time with Spruce and the highly impressive Danny Peacock following Loughlin over for tries.

Tomlinson, with two touchdowns, had an outstanding second half and might have won the man of the match award, but there were no complaints when that went to Steve McNamara.

● In the other quarter-finals, St Helens, the holders and favourites, eased past Keighley 24-0; Leeds cruised into their fifth successive semi-final by defeating Featherstone Rovers 32-12; and Salford Reds beat Warrington Wolves 29-10.

Football results

FA CUP Sixth round Chesterfield 1 Wrexham 0; Derby Co 0 Middlesbro 2; Portsmouth 1 Chelsea 4; Sheff Wed 0 Wimbledon 2.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP Arsenal 2 Nottm For 0; Coventry 0 Leicester 0; Leeds 1 Everton 0; Sunderland 2 Man Utd 1; Liverpool 4 Newcastle 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Man Utd (played 29-points 57); 2, Liverpool (29-56); 3, Arsenal (30-54).

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE First Division Birmingham 2 Southend 1; Bolton 7 Swindon 0; Bradford C 3 Grimsby 4; Charlton 2 Crystal Pal 1; Man City 1 Oldham 0; Norwich 1 Port Vale 1; Oxford 1 WBA 0; QPR 2 Huddersfld 0; Stoke 0 Ipswich 1; Wolves 3 Tranmere 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Bolton (37-76); 2, Wolves (38-65); 3, Barnsley (35-62).

Second Division Burnley 5 Peterboro 0; Gillingham 3 Watford 1; Luton 0 Millwall 2; Notts Co 0 Crewe 1; Plymth 1 Rotherham 0; Preston 1 Brentford 0; Stockport 2 Bury 1; Walsall 2 Shrewsbry 2; Wycombe 2 Bristol R 0; York 1 Blackpool 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Brentford (34-61); 2, Luton (33-57); 3, Millwall (35-57).

Third Division Brighton 4 Leyton O 4; Chester 1 Barnet 0; Doncaster 0 Hull 0; Fulham 4 Scarboro 0; Hereford 1 Northampton 2; Lincoln 2 Hartlepool 1; Mansfield 1 Cardiff 3; Rochdale 3 Wigan 1; Sc'thorpe 0 Carlisle 0; Swansea 3 Exeter 1; Torquay 1 Darlington 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Carlisle (36-73); 2, Fulham (36-68); 3, Wigan (36-67).

TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP Fifth round Dundee U 4 Motherwell 1; Falkirk 2 Raith 0; Morton 2 Kilmarnk 5.

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE Premier Division Hibernian 1 Dunfrmline 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Rangers (28-68); 2, Celtic (28-63); 3, Dundee Utd (28-49).

SCOTTISH LEAGUE First Division Partick 1 Airdrie 2. **Leading positions:** 1, St Johnstone (28-60); 2, Dundee (28-48); 3, Airdrie (28-46).

Second Division Ayr 2 Queen Sth 2; Clyde 3 Stranraer 0; Dumbarton 2 Berwick 2; Hamilton 4 Brechin 0; Livingston 1 Stenhsmr 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Ayr (28-62); 2, Hamilton (28-53); 3, Livingston (27-50).

Third Division Alloa 2 Albion 0; Arbroath 3 Forfar 3; Montrose 0 E. Stirling 2; Queens Pk 1 Inverness CT 2; Ross Co 4 Cowdnbth 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Inverness CT (27-60); 2, Ross Co (27-49); 3, Forfar (28-46).

Football FA Cup sixth round: Sheffield Wednesday 0 Wimbledon 2

Hard act to follow . . . Vinnie Jones leads the celebrations at Hillsborough PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

Wimbledon still at the double

David Lacey

WILL the wonders of Wimbledon never cease? At Hillsborough on Sunday an instinctive and undying sense of opportunism took them to the FA Cup semi-finals, where an encounter with Chelsea will guarantee London a presence at Wembley on May 17.

Ruud Gullit's side may be many people's Cup favourites but who would bet against Wimbledon now? Quite apart from anything else, they have already beaten Chelsea, admittedly the pre-Zola Chelsea, by 4-2 at Stamford Bridge. They have also knocked out the holders Manchester United and here they beat David Pleat's ever-improving Wednesday, a team beaten just once in their previous 22 fixtures, and always looked the stronger side overall.

Thus Wimbledon, like Middlesbrough, can still reach two finals this season. Fatigue could be their biggest enemy, as later this week they meet Leicester City at Selhurst Park in the second leg of their Coca-Cola Cup semi-final, which will be their eighth match in 25 days and their 41st competitive game of the season.

Not that there was much sign of tiredness in Wimbledon legs at Hillsborough. They were always Wednesday's masters for pace, and once Robbie Earle had given them the lead in the 75th minute, eight or nine men withdrew behind the ball to present the opposition with a well-nigh impenetrable barrier of bodies. Dean Holdsworth's goal in the final minute was a bonus.

For Wednesday's attack the afternoon became smothering Sunday. But Pleat had another description for it — "Sunday, bloody Sunday" — and justifiably so. His team had lost Newsome, the loftiest peak of their defence, after 14 minutes and Hyde, the lungs of their midfield, after 36. Both suffered ankle injuries which will keep them out for the rest of the season; Newsome a dislocation, Hyde ruptured ligaments.

In the ensuing reshuffles Atherton withdrew alongside Walker in the back four and Hirst came off the bench to join Booth up front, while Humphreys, the other substitute, and Carbone augmented the midfield.

Yet Wednesday wasted two outstanding opportunities to put the tie beyond Wimbledon's reach. In the 65th minute Humphreys sent Hirst careering away on the right. Wimbledon, taken unawares, could not get back and after Hirst had laid the ball low into the path of Booth a goal beckoned. Booth, however, slipped at the crucial moment and shot wide. Five minutes later Hirst and Carbone split the Wimbledon cover and this time Whittingham had an even better opportunity — but he also dragged his shot wide.

Earlier Booth had gone close with a couple of headers. With 11 minutes remaining and Wednesday straining for an equaliser, Booth was brought down by Jones after he had turned towards the 18-yard line and was about to shoot. Jones, already cautioned for a first-half foul on Carbone, was fortunate to escape his second dismissal of the season.

Joe Kinnear reckoned that giving Leonhardsen three games' rest had proved crucial to the outcome, and certainly the Norwegian's tireless work in relieving the defence and setting up attacks contributed much to Wimbledon's win. But equally, as Pleat pointed out, the constant threat up front of Gayle and Ekoku meant that Wednesday could never be completely at ease with themselves when they moved forward, for fear that one of these two players would find the back door ajar.

In fact this is precisely what happened. After Earle and Ardley had completed a double exchange of passes on the right Ardley's cross was met by Gayle, who controlled the ball deftly before clipping it over his shoulder to Earle. His shot gave Pressman no chance.

Wimbledon would have settled for that but in the closing seconds Nolan's mishit pass was pounced on by Leonhardsen who calmly sent in Holdsworth, one of Wimbledon's two late substitutes, for number two.

● At Fratton Park, Portsmouth were outclassed by Chelsea, who ran out 4-1 winners. Mark Hughes opened the scoring for the Londoners, with Dennis Wise adding a second before half-time. After the break, Zola made it 3-0 before Burton scored a consolation goal. However, their celebrations were shortlived as Wise grabbed his second and his side's fourth in an authoritative performance.

Chesterfield 1 Wrexham 0

Beaumont prolongs Chesterfield's fantasy

David Hopps

A FEW months ago Chesterfield could comfortably be classified as the worst cup team in the land. Now the most magical season in their history has spirited them into the FA Cup semi-finals. Their goalscorer was Chris Beaumont, a £25,000 close-season buy from Stockport County, who beat Wrexham's full-back Deryn Brace to settle a bracing quarter-final tie between the two surviving Second Division sides 15 minutes into the second-half.

For Wrexham it was an infuriating defensive error, for Chesterfield the continuation of a wonderful fantasy. As Beaumont and Brace harried for possession on the edge of the area, the goalkeeper Marriott wandered into no man's land, leaving Beaumont a simple task to poke the ball over him and Brace remonstrating over the confusion.

Beaumont had scored only once before for Chesterfield but he has innumerable memories of Wembley, having played there four times for Stockport — twice in the Autoglass Trophy, twice in promotion play-offs, without ever finishing on the winning side — but he is keenly aware that an appearance there in the FA Cup would be beyond belief.

"With our awful Cup record, the first-round tie against Bury was like our Cup final," he said with a laugh. "We've been winning them ever since."

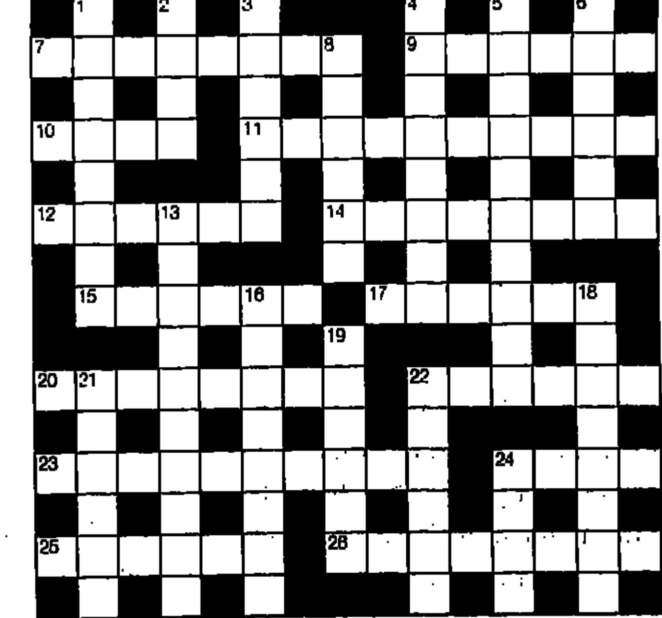
Thousands of lower-division supporters give their lives to one club and never experience anything like this. When the referee Mike Riley blew for time and Tina Turner's Simply The Best blared over the PA system, they danced to it, they sang to it and, yes, many cried to it. This was not the routine commemoration of superiority as seen at Manchester United or Liverpool, but joy tinged with disbelief.

The thousands who could not buy tickets had every right to be enraged: either the official capacity is so low as to be a nonsense, or safety standards behind the goal were unacceptable throughout the second half. But Chesterfield were oblivious to such considerations.

The referee strove to keep the tense final minutes honest, booking Wrexham's striker Gareth Owen for trying to con a penalty and Mercer for time-wasting. When Beaumont was substituted in injury time, he was so weary he could barely drag himself from the field.

Chesterfield's semi-final opponents, Middlesbrough, reached the last four for the first time in their 121-year history with a 2-0 defeat of Derby County at the Baseball Ground on Saturday, with goals from Juninho and Ravanelli.

Cryptic crossword by Crispa



Across

7 Left the queen without anything for amusement (8)
9 The carriage of cash and gold (6)
10 Lean nurse (4)
11 Trip a char's arranged for certain top men (10)
12 "Deputy?" a member scoffed (6)
14 The cowboy drove many a champion (8)
15 This is just too much for any musician! (6)
17 Less relaxed — resent interference (6)
20 Green vegetable tolerated by the merry monarch (8)
22 A flier is clothed in leather (6)
23 Place for a marksman of the old school? (10)
24 Stand up a male (4)
25 Committed to the paper, but restrained (6)
26 The person at the bank interested in liquid assets (8)

Down

1 Nasty beast imprisoning people underground (8)
2 Getting a little country cottage delights the elderly (4)
3 Setting the pace over exercise, that's plain (6)
4 Friendly understanding of everyone with a nice disposition (8)
5 No government supporters! (10)
6 Somewhat of a cad with any woman (6)
8 Note: go for profit (6)
13 Youngster spinning second tale (10)
16 Forges ahead and gains from it (8)
18 Serving men in the company backing others for personal protection (8)
19 The character of the rent-collector (6)
21 The more demanding boy (6)
22 Priest forming a band (6)
24 Cover outside right, but make complaint (4)

Last week's solution

D	I	P	S	T	I	C	K		A	M	O	U	N	T
O		I		O		H				I		N		R
C	A	P	E	W	R	A	T	H		L	E	A	V	E
K		E		T		N		O		K		M		M
			F	O	R	C	E	M	A	J	E	U	R	E
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